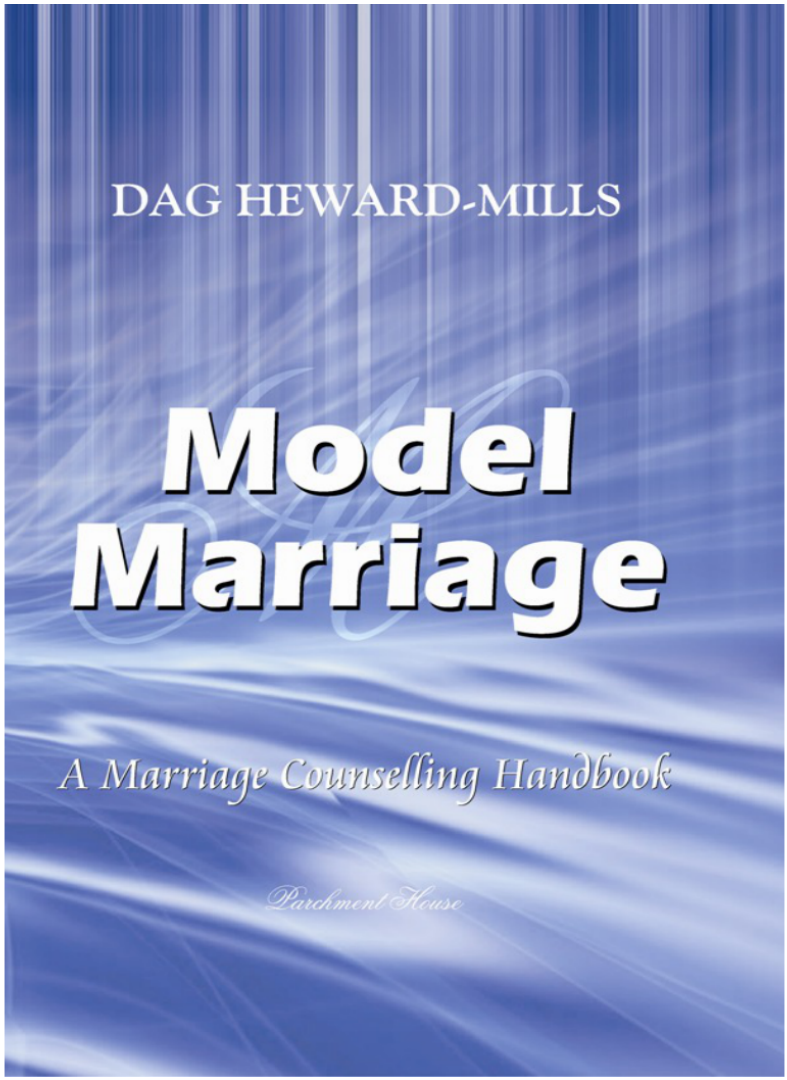
DAG HEWARD-MILLS
Model Marriage
A Marriage Counselling Handbook
Parchment House

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

Model Marriage

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To all of you wonderful people, I want to say that you are a great team!

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the second and expanded edition of the marriage counselling handbook that was originally known as The Marriage Counselling Manual. This handbook, first published in 1992, and the oldest publication of this ministry, has come about through years of studying the Word of God and gaining practical experience in marriage.

I realize from my pastoral experience, that marriage and its complicated challenges can adversely affect most Christians and hinder individuals who are called to the ministry.

I am happy to have written and compiled this book through different stages of my life because I have learnt from experience that we emphasize different things at different stages of life and ministry. For instance, I have discovered that an individual's temperament in the marriage relationship is basically what determines the person's behaviour in the marriage context. In spite of much counselling, teaching and prayer, most people simply live according to their temperamental dispositions. These truths were not as apparent to me ten years ago as they are today. Also, male and female behaviour patterns are much easier to predict, as they do not vary much from person to person.

For me therefore, marriage counselling although basically the same, must be done with full cognizance of these realities, that is, temperamental and gender behaviour patterns. If pastors fully understand these important realities, they will not become frustrated when their counsellees do not change much. I also believe that we will be less prone to divorce when we understand how much our maleness, femaleness and temperamental dispositions affect us all.

I have also observed complicated situations, which lead to divorce; a phenomenon that seemed impossible at the beginning of my Christian ministry. I have come to appreciate the contribution of not-so-easily-diagnosed psychological and psychiatric illnesses in

spousal behaviour, especially in females. Perhaps, in later editions of this book, there will be more reference to such matters.

Recognizing that my marriage experiences alone are limited, I have always tried to tap into the minds of both men and women on various issues in this book. In so doing, I have gathered different attitudes and perspectives from all sides including males and females, the educated and the uneducated, the medical and the non-medical.

This research has also been enhanced by some surveys that were conducted on different groups and individuals.

All in all, it has been a journey of continuous learning that will never end. I pray that God will give you wisdom for your marriage as well as wisdom to help others. I pray that every couple that benefits from this book will have a stable and happy marriage.

SECTION 1

THE BELOVEDS

Chapter 1

The Beloveds

Who is a Beloved?

My beloved is mine, and I am his…

Song of Solomon 2:16

A "beloved" is a person with whom you have a relationship, which is intended to end up in marriage. In other words, he or she is the man or woman you have officially agreed to marry. Some use the terms fiance(e), boyfriend, or girlfriend to describe the relationship, but in this book we are adopting the term "beloved".

We do not advise young men and women to have close relationships with the opposite sex, which are not intended for marriage, as these boyfriends and girlfriends commonly involve themselves in immoral vices such as fornication. Hence, we caution that such relationships should be entered into solely for the purpose of marriage, and that the period for developing the relationship before the marriage (traditionally referred to as courtship) should not be too long.

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

1 Corinthians 7:2

Are You Sure You Want to Marry This Person?

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

Genesis 24:58

Eight Things to Consider When Choosing a Beloved

1. The fact that the parents are good does not mean the child will also be a good spouse. Is he/she committed to God?[1]

2. Don't marry just because your parents say so. Is your intended partner your friend?[2]

3. If you marry too early you will miss out on certain things in life (eg. your youth, your time of being single and free).

4. Consider the fact that people do not really change and so anything that you do not like about your beloved and therefore spouse, is also not likely to change.

5. Will you be in a position to manage financially?

6. Will you have a place to stay when you marry?

7. Tribal differences are going to affect your marriage.

8. Disparity in levels of education will also affect your marriage.[3]

Chapter 2

The Official Recognition of a Relationship by the Church

Three Reasons Why a Relationship Should Be Registered

Every church should have a register in which is recorded pertinent details of its members who are intending to get married. This serves as the official recognition of the relationship by the church, and should be done at least six months prior to the intended marriage. Why register?

I. To ascertain if some people are married already

Some couples may already have children from the current or a past relationship. In some cultures, it is customary to have what is known as a traditional wedding ceremony. It is important to know if the couple have performed the said rites or not. Any such ceremony, tradition or rite must be brought to light. Failure to disclose such information may lead to a termination of the relationship.

II. To ensure that all such relationships are not hidden

It is imperative that all relationships be open before God, the pastor and the church congregation. Carrying out the relationship openly also helps to promote a healthy and wholesome relationship.

III. To get to know the couple better

By registering the couple, you will learn about them in a more personal manner:

1. The couple's full name (for completing the register).

2. You can better assess their Christian commitment.

3. Know the church of your member's beloved, if not from your church.

4. Probe their church activity levels.

5. Confirm any past relationships.

6. Ascertain, if any, incidence(s) of fornication both past and present. It will also allow you to know if they are virgins.

7. Confirm whether present relationship is smooth or stormy.

8. Know how soon they intend to marry. Unduly long relationships are not encouraged.

Ten Facts to Discover through the Official Recognition of a Relationship

1. Name and age of both the man and woman.

2. Date the relationship began.

3. How long they have known each other.[1]

4. Sickle cell status of both the man and woman.[2]

5. H.I.V. status of both the man and woman.

6. Any other medical condition eg. epilepsy, blood pressure, high fever, etc.

7. Educational background of both the man and woman.

8. Working experience of both the man and woman.

9. Parental knowledge and consent.

10. Tentative wedding date.

Sickle Cell and HIV Tests

The relevance of this lesson is to place the request by the church for a sickle cell test and an HIV test into proper perspective.

Sickle Cell Test

If the couple have a result of “AA” (sickling negative) and “AS” there is no real problem.

If both of the beloveds have an “S” somewhere (that is, sickling positive), the counsellor should advise a break-up of the relationship for the following reasons:

There is a 25% chance of having an “SS” child, which means that any or all of their children could be “SS”. It could also mean that none may be “SS”.

This situation could also be compared to having a boy or girl. There is a 50% chance of having a boy or girl. This means that one could have all children as boys or all as girls.

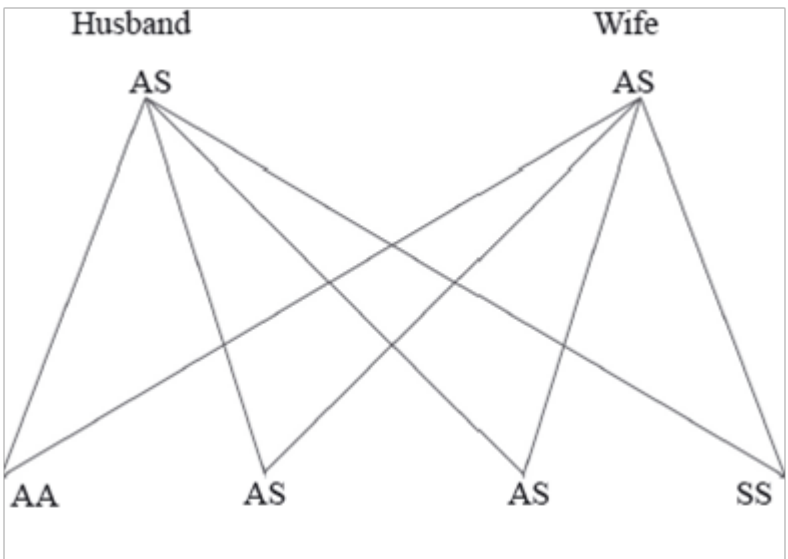

Fig. 1: Possible Sickle Cell Test Results

Medically, the “SS” child can have problems such as:

1. Frequent admissions to the hospital.

2. Numerous expenses relating to medical care.

3. Many hours will be spent at the hospital.

4. Possibility of sudden death of child.

5. Time otherwise to be spent at home will be spent at the hospital.

6. This will be an extra strain on the wife (mother) in addition to all her roles.

7. This could lead to quarrels at home and a possible shortage of money.

8. There is likely to be a morbid fear of pregnancy, which could also affect the sex life of the couple.

9. The child itself will be a very unhappy one.

The counsellor may ask the beloveds to recall whether they are acquainted with any sickler. The acceptable situation is that they both be sickling negative or at worst, one negative and one positive. If both are positive then the situation could be dangerous. Medical advice is against such a marriage and so is the church, however, the decision is theirs.

If a couple decides to go ahead in spite of all the medical and church counsel, their marriage will still be blessed. They will be supported in prayer so that, by God's grace, they will not have any sickness-prone children.

HIV Test

If either partner is positive, they should be strongly advised to break up the relationship and forget about the planned marriage, for obvious reasons.

Chapter 3

Counselling the Beloveds

After receiving results of medical tests requested, discuss the issues arising from the results with the couple. Confirm general progress towards their engagement and determine a tentative date for the wedding.

While in a relationship the couple is expected to be holy. It is important to exhort them strongly to desist from fornication. The counsellor should not be judgemental. The couple should be encouraged to be active in the church, and to stay on the safe road of holiness.[1]

Don’ts in a Relationship between Beloveds

1. Avoid hugging, holding and kissing.[2]

2. Don’t sit on his lap.

3. Don’t stay indoors alone with your beloved for long periods.

4. Don’t be alone in isolated places at odd hours.

5. Don’t put your hands under the skirt or through the flap.

6. Don’t sleep/lie on the same bed with your beloved.

7. Don’t undress in the presence of your beloved.

8. Don’t fondle the breasts, vagina and penis.

9. Don’t have sex with your beloved (that is fornication)![3]

NB: Pre-marital counselling covers a period of six months. Beloveds must be informed to start their counselling early enough to cover all aspects of the counselling before the wedding.

Counsellors should not yield to pressure to perform weddings at short notice. This may be deceptive.

For the Lady

It is considered to be her fault if any sin of immorality occurs. This is because even though men are usually under a lot of sexual tension in the relationship, the woman must not give in to this pressure.

(a) She should be encouraged to be in control of the relationship. She must have a great deal of respect for herself and never allow anyone to mess about with her.

(b) She must have a great deal of respect for herself and never allow anyone to mess about with her.

(c) She must be urged to keep her virginity intact so that when she happens to be counselling in the future, she can say with confidence what she did not do while courting.[4]

Preparing for the Wedding (Checklist)

Discuss wedding preparations with the couple and give as much advice as possible. Touch on the following:

(a) Choice of venue.

(b) Bridal dress—possibility of borrowing one must be mentioned.

(c) Suits (groom and best man).

(d) Car(s) to be used.

(e) Timing of wedding.

(f) Time of arrival of bride—alert them to things that delay brides.

(g) Scripture Reading—choice of couple.

(h) Chairperson (optional).

(i) Seating plan at the high table—include parents, chairperson, etc.

(should normally exclude pastors).

(j) Alcohol at wedding (bear in mind that some couples may not be in control on this issue).

(k) Proposal of toast and response. Advise that it be made as short as possible with rendition of thanks to God, parents, pastors and other key persons.

(l) Necessary permits (City Council, Local Council in charge of marriages in your area or country).

(m) Picture-taking. Beware of “mercenary” photographers who have not been invited but will come later with pictures they took to demand money.

(n) Video Coverage

(o) Decorations

(p) Honeymoon arrangements.

(q) Caution them not to use all their money for the wedding.

SECTION 2

THE FUNDAMENTALS

Chapter 4

Definition of Marriage

Introduction

Marriage is an institution ordained and ordered by God.[1] It is the only institution that was established before sin came into the world.

Three Ways of Getting Married

1. Civil Marriage

(This is in accordance to the civil laws of the land.)

(a) In most countries, the Marriage Ordinance prescribes that a certificate must be acquired from the local or municipal authority, granting a 3-month period during which a couple must be married after their names have been published at the Municipal/City Council or the church for three weeks. If no one opposes the marriage within these three weeks, the marriage may take place.

(b) A legal register must be signed by at least two witnesses.

(c) Parental consent is desirable, encouraged and very much sought after, but not 100% essential if the couple is above 18.

(d) Marriage is only broken by a legal divorce.

(e) It is a crime to marry again while still married under the Marriage Ordinance.

2. Customary Marriage

(This is for the involvement of the families.)

(a) Families get together and traditionally hand over their daughter after customary rites are performed.

(b) The rites vary depending on the family and tribe.

(c) Some families consider this to be a full and proper marriage and expect the couple to live together afterwards.

(d) Some families consider this as merely an engagement, that is, an agreement to marry.

(e) This church does not recognize customary marriage as marriage unless it is blessed by the pastors. Customary marriage is a polygamous arrangement. (This means a man can marry as many wives as he wants.) The church believes that it is important for its members to marry under the Marriage Ordinance because legal marriage under the Ordinance does not permit polygamy.

3. Spiritual Marriage

(This is so that the couple vow to obey God's law in relation to marriage and also to have the marriage sealed by God.)

(a) The church conducts the vows and blesses the couple.[2]

(b) As far as the church is concerned, you are not married unless this is done.

(c) The church also publishes the names of all couples getting married, on its notice board for at least three weeks, so that if there is any objection to the marriage it may be voiced.

We require all couples to fulfil all 3 forms of marriage to avoid confusion and dispute later on, as to whether they were or have indeed been married.[3]

Chapter 5

Biblical Reasons for Marriage

Introduction

Marriage is not man's idea, neither was it initiated by him. It was God himself who realized man's need for a companion and addressed it. To understand why God instituted marriage, we need to go to the Bible for the answers.

Biblical Reasons for Marriage

1. To solve the problem of loneliness

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

2. To be a helpmeet

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

Helpmeet: Ways the woman can help the man—by prayer, sex, providing food, counsel, encouragement, comfort; by showing hospitality; by performing housekeeping duties; by helping financially, socially, etc.[1]

3. To avoid fornication

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

1 Corinthians 7:1,2

4. To have children

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:26-28

When children enter into the world outside the medium of marriage, they are handicapped and often turn out to be delinquent.

Please note: The absence of children does not nullify your marriage. Similarly, it is not the arrival of children that validates the marriage.

SECTION 3

THE RELATIONSHIP

Chapter 6

The God-Type of Marriage

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:21-25

Five-Fold Pattern

1. One man/One woman [1]

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Genesis 2:22

2. Leaving and Cleaving [2]

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

There are 4 ways of leaving:

(a) Physical (location).

(b) Economic/financial.

(c) Influence, direction, counsel of parents and other members of the extended family.

(d) Close friends, especially of the opposite sex. [3]

3. Companionship [4]

(Man was alone, without a friend.)

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

4. Openness [5]

(Let your spouse know all about you to avoid surprises, mistrust and suspicion.) [6]

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:21-25

There are 4 ways to be naked/open/transparent:

(a) Historically e.g. past relationships, children

(b) Financially e.g. debts, income, assets, obligations.

(c) Physically e.g. naked at home, sexual liberty.

(d) Spiritually e.g. aspirations in future, personal sins.[7]

5. Sex and Reproduction

God's plan is for sex and reproduction within the context of marriage. [8]Sex and reproduction outside the context of marriage lead to all kinds of problems—step homes, stepchildren, and sexually transmitted diseases.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the

fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:26-28

Chapter 7

The Christian Home

Definition

The Christian home is not just a building. It is an atmosphere, a place you are always eager to be. A home is a place where a family lives. The first home was a garden. This gives two impressions of a home:

1. A place to enjoy—beautiful, peaceful, welcoming.

2. A place to tend and make beautiful.

The most important element of the home, however, is not the building (how large or how beautiful it is), but the relationship existing between the people within.

A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

Proverbs 19:13

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

Proverbs 25:24

A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike. Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which betrayeth itself.

Proverbs 27:15,16

The home can even be in the slums and gutters or can be the bus stop, provided it is a place where two people who love each other have agreed to live and raise a family they can equally love.

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Luke 12:15

Importance of the Home to the Husband and Wife

1. A place of relaxation—for the man.

2. A shield and an insulation from the world and its pressures—for the woman.

3. A place of refreshing and strengthening—for both.

4. A place of training for the children.[1]

4 Steps to Developing a Christian Home

A happy balanced home is always the dream of brides and bridegrooms. However, many people never experience the joy and bliss they strive for when they decide to get married. A happy home does not just happen. It must be developed. Nothing happens by chance! It does not drop from the sky.[2]

Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.

Proverbs 14:4

1. Christ must be acknowledged as the foundation and head of the home.

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

Luke 6:47,48

When God is the focus of the couple, they draw closer to each other

because their closeness to God draws them to each other (Fig. 2). As a result of that, they end up having a happy home. [3]

When God is the focus of just one of them, they do not get closer (Fig. 3). In some cases, they neither grow apart nor draw closer (Fig. 5) but their relationship is stale, and their home is not a really happy one.

In the case where both the husband and wife are following their own dreams, and they are not involving God in their lives (Fig. 5), they grow further and further apart and this often leads to a broken home.

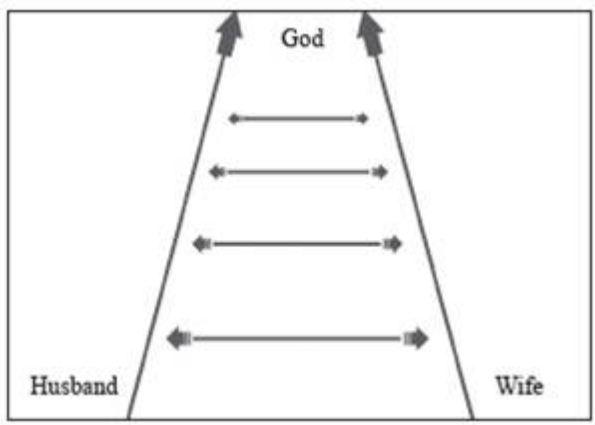

Fig. 2: Couple become closer as they both get closer to God

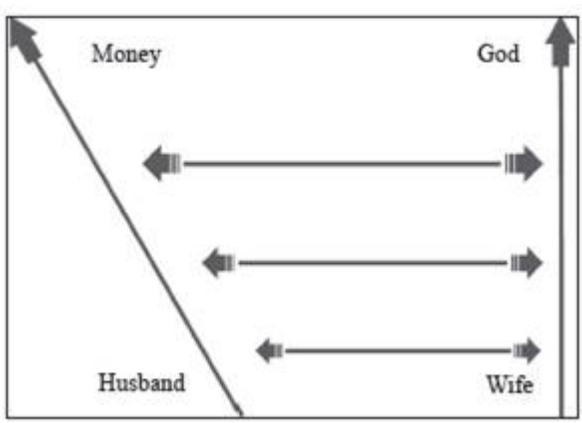

Fig. 3: Couple grow apart with time because God is not the focus of both of them

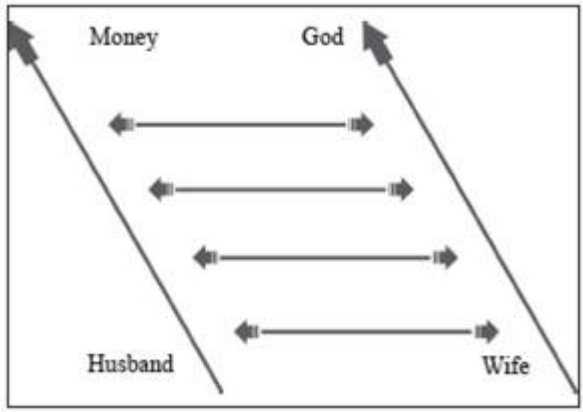

Fig. 4: Husband and wife are not growing apart but are neither getting closer because only one of them is focusing on God.

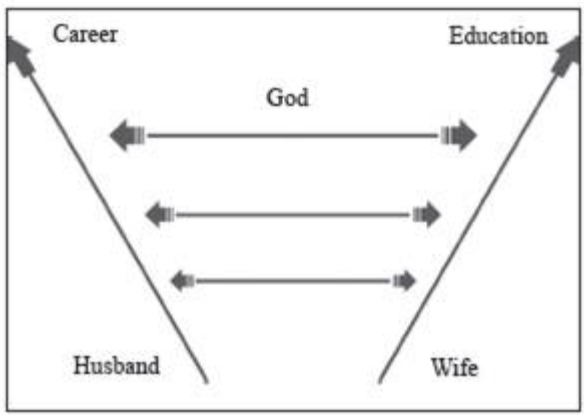

Fig. 5: Couple grow further and further apart because both the husband and his wife are following their own dreams and God is not part of their lives.

2. Apply biblical principles

(a) The Word of God is his manual for marriage.

(b) Build your marriage around the church.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1:1-6

Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:

Proverbs 24:3

3. Develop family worship [4]

(a) Ensure that you either hold regular quiet times (devotions) together or when that is not possible, each of you does it regularly. But by all means find time once in a while to do it together (especially with the children).

(b) Attend church services and be involved in church activities. While in church, husband and wife must sit together.

(c) Train children to know the importance of Sundays.

4. Think as a Christian spouse

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Philippians 2:3 (NIV)

(a) Married people must reconcile plans that they held individually before the marriage, to suit the home.

(b) Be willing to give up certain interests, plans and preferences for the sake of the home.

(c) Do not always insist on your own way; be ready to compromise. [5]

Chapter 8

Love in Marriage

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth…

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love needs an object towards which it may direct its attention, care and resources. Love gives and is therefore rewarded; the man is rewarded with a helpmate, the woman with someone to love her and provide her with security.

There are three types of love that must be practised in marriage.[1] All three types are important for a happy marriage:

1. Agape

2. Phileo

3. Eros

1. Agape[2]

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we shouldbe called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

1 John 3:1

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:25

(a) "Agape" is normally described as the God-kind of love, which says, "I love you in spite of this issue." It is a willingness to accept the other person for who he/she is without expecting a change into "the ideal spouse" in shape, form, size, or intellect. This means that even if your spouse never reduces/increases in size or becomes better at any other area, you are still prepared to walk in love.[3]

(b) It is unconditional. It does not love on condition that the other partner is well-behaved. That is, the husband does not say that, "I will love her if she submits to me." Nor should the wife say that, "I will love and submit to him if only he can be a bit more loving according to the Bible."[4]

(c) One must decide to love only one's spouse and no other person.

(d) "Agape" love is sacrificial and therefore will go the extra mile to give time, attention, gifts etc.

(e) This type of love has to be a conscious decision. You walk in love because the Word of God commands you to love your spouse.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Colossians 3:19

The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness …That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

Titus 2:3-4

(f) This type of love covers a multitude of sins and does not refer to

a person's past sins and mistakes.

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

Proverbs 10:12

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.

Proverbs 17:9

(g) The "agape" kind of love trusts ("... believeth all things") and therefore is not suspicious of the other spouse's every move and associations. Your love must move you to a position of trust so that you do not relate to your spouse with suspicion; questioning motives and prejudging his/her actions especially in relation to the opposite sex.[5]

2. Phileo

Let brotherly love continue.

Hebrews 13:1

(a) This has to do with brotherly love. It is the sort of love that binds siblings.[6]

(b) Brotherly love must also continue in marriage.

(c) This aspect of love which provides friendship and respect must be present in the marriage.

(d) You must be able to chat with each other, play together, tease each other, etc.

(e) Talk about your interests, e.g. politics, etc.

(f) Be supportive of each other.

(g) Defend each other.

3. Eros

Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

Proverbs 5:19

(a) “Eros” is sexual love.[7]

(b) Romance must be present in every marriage. It is not only for beloveds or newly¬weds per se. You must continue with things like having lunch/dinner together, taking walks, visiting people, etc.

NB: These three types of love must be present and working together all the time. One or two without the other(s) is incomplete and impracticable. They are mutually reinforcing.

Marriage without AGAPE is chaotic and selfish and is usually full of quarrels.

Marriage without PHILEO leads to a wicked husband or an unkind wife.

Marriage with only EROS love usually has short-lived happiness.

Marriage without EROS usually strains the relationship of the couple and leads to adultery.

Chapter 9

Communication in Marriage

Speaking the truth in love to one another makes us grow up in our relationship with God. Similarly, speaking the truth in love to each other as married people makes us grow closer to each other.

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:15

A husband and wife must be the best of friends; share every success, disappointment, joy and pain together.

Speak

Husband and wife must always make the effort to speak to each other (the children in turn learn this). A clear sign of unhappiness is when the couple are very quiet at home but immediately a visitor arrives, they begin to talk. They, however, revert to silence when the visitor leaves.

1. Communication results in growth.[1]

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:15

2. Speaking brings relief and healing.

I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion. For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Job 32:17-20

3. Choose to speak life.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Proverbs 18:21

(a) Speak good things about your spouse, e.g. “I love you, you are wonderful, you look sweet, your food was good, you look charming”, etc.

(b) Confess positive things about your marriage.

(c) Express your love to each other verbally.

(d) Speak about things that you do/do not like.

(e) Speak to edify.[2]

Speak the Truth

1. Speak the truth, and be transparent to each other.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:25

2. If we are allowed to think about these things, then we can say them.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4:8

3. Do not pretend. The truth will show up later, but it may be too late.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29

Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Colossians 4:6

Speak the Truth in Love

1. Speak the truth by all means, but speak it in love.[3]

This means:

(a) Be careful how you communicate what you have to say.[4]

(b) Be careful when you communicate what you have to say.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Proverbs 25:11

A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

Proverbs 15:23

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Isaiah 50:4

2. Do not be carried away by your emotional distress.[5]

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29

Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Colossians 4:6

I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion. For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Job 32:17-20

Avoid These Things[6]

(a) Shouting

(b) Insulting

(c) Arguing to win[7]

(d) Always bursting into tears

(e) Doing all the talking without listening to the other side

(f) Always keeping quiet and refusing to communicate

(g) Avoid words like “never” and “always” which confer a permanent negative verdict on the person. Some examples are:

i. You are always late!

ii. You are never there when I need you!

iii. You never do anything right

Some Examples of Things Not to Say

(a)I will slap you!

(b) I will divorce you!

(c) “Swine!”, “Twerp!”

(d) You are hopeless!

(e) You are hopeless!

(f) I blame myself for marrying you!

(g) You can go to hell!

(h) You call yourself a man!

(i) I hate you!

(j) Can’t you be like Mr. X or Madam Y?

(k) You are ugly, you are a witch!

(l) This marriage will not last

(m) I don’t think we are meant for each other

(n) Prostitute!

(o) Bitch!

(p) If you misbehave, I’ll leave you!

(q) I don’t love you anymore!

Other Ways of Communicating

(a) Giving of gifts/presents.

(b) Touching and kissing.

(c) Writing of notes/letters etc.

(d) Signs and gestures.[8]

(e) Singing (indirectly conveying a message in song—this can be good or bad; always choose the good).

Chapter 10

Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage

Faithfulness could be defined as loyalty or ability to be trusted.

(a) It is required for all Christians

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

I Corinthians 4.2

(b) Faithful could also be said to be the cornerstone of the character of a person.

(c) It is a pattern which is seen in relation to God, church, work/ activities, friends and secular work.

(d) Unfaithfulness in one area of life may be indicative of possible unfaithfulness in the others.

Circumstances That Will Test Faithfulness

(a) Sickness.

(b) Childlessness.

(c) Childbirth.

(d) Sudden prosperity.

(e) Joblessness.

(f) Long separation.

(g) Old age (menopause etc.).

(h) Poverty

(i) Impotence.

If you find yourself in any of these circumstances you must be on high alert for temptations to be unfaithful.

Some High Risk Jobs

(a) Airline workers

(b) Sailors

(c) Soldiers

(d) Long distance drivers

Conditions That Are Likely to Aggravate Potential for Unfaithfulness

Unfaithfulness or infidelity is sin. It normally has the end result of adultery, though, it starts in seemingly harmless ways like spending more time with someone who is not your spouse. The following may however act as catalysts to this phenomenon, which is more of a problem of the heart:[1]

(a) Becoming unattractive.

(b) Not caring about things like one's weight, looks, and interest in sex.

(c) General loss of interest in dressing, hair and indeed the general appearance.

(d) Infrequent sexual intercourse between a couple.

(e) Lack of communication.

(f) Lack of fellowship.

(g) Failure to develop an interest in sexual activity.

(h) Failure to sustain interest in one another.

(i) Fortnight marriages—couple come together only fortnightly.

(j) Failure to share the same bedroom.

(k) Trekking jobs.

(l) Turning down your spouse's sexual advances frequently.

(m) Unhealthy work circumstances e.g. a male and female working closely together in the same room for long hours.

i. Travelling/trekking together and staying in the same hotel.

ii. Going on long courses abroad and short business trips.

iii. Holding meetings in hotel rooms.

How to Foster Faithfulness in Marriage

(a) Fear God and be obedient to his Word.

(b) Be prayerful (both of you).

(c) Be active in all church activities.

(d) Avoid developing close relationships with others of the opposite sex.

(e) Have mutual friends. Don't have friends who are not friends of your partner.

(f) Concerning the issue of childlessness, remember that your partner will be what God wants him/her to be.

And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

Genesis 30:2

(g) Wear your wedding rings always.

(h) Talk positively about your spouse.

(i) Sit by your spouse in church.

(j) Be sexually active and infuse some variety and excitement into the marriage.[2]

(k) In addition to the above, find solutions to the causes of unfaithfulness stated in the paragraph preceding this one.[3]

SECTION 4

THE DUTIES

Chapter 11

Duties of the Husband

The word “husband” comes from some Anglo-Saxon words which mean “house band”. This implies a strip of metal (or rope) used to bind the house together. A husband therefore binds together the home in terms of its organisation and control.[1]

1. Head of Family

Headship connotes:

(a) Authority - in bring up bringing

(b) Leadership - in providing directing and guidance

(c) Responsibility - decision-making; don’t shirk it so that you can blame someone else when things backfire

The man must rule his home spiritually, financially and socially.[2] When Adam and Eve sinned against God and he came into the garden, He first called ADAM and asked, “Where are you?” The man is held responsible for anything that goes wrong in the home, e.g. divorce, rebellious children, unhappy wife etc.[3]

Authority Structure[4]

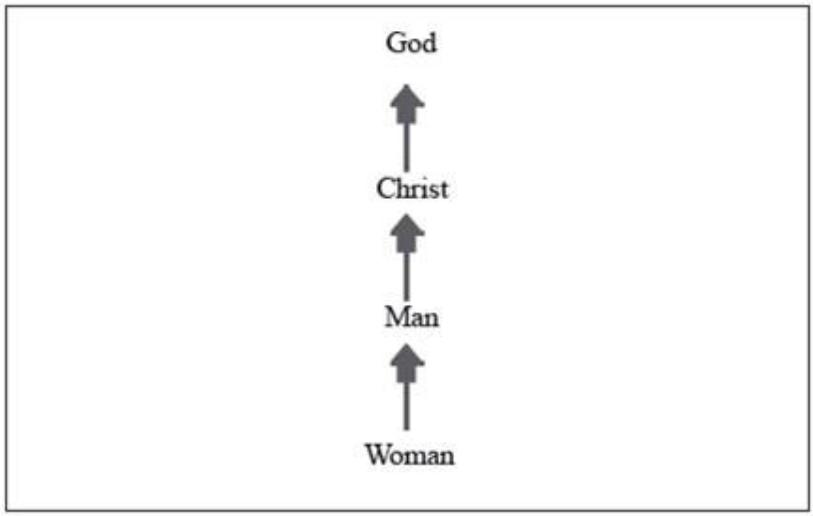

Fig. 6

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

1 Corinthians 11:3

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Ephesians 5:23

2. Love

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Ephesians 5:25-29

(a) Verse 25 Give of his best to her, sacrificially.

(b) Verse 27 Present her back to himself.

(c) Verse 29 Nourish and cherish her (with the Word of God and physical things).[5]

Note:

(a) The man is presenting the woman back to himself. It is for his own good to nourish, cherish and beautify his wife.

(b) Let her feel loved, wanted and accepted.[6]

3. Make Her Feel Happy at Home

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Proverbs 5:18

(a) Let her feel accepted and special.

(b) Stay at home as often as possible and provide companionship.

(c) Do not be harsh on her.

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

Colossians 3:19 (NIV)

(d) Listen to her a lot and encourage her to talk.[7]

4. Respect and Honour Her

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Let her feel important with you—especially in public (talk about her positively).

(b) Be tolerant because she is the weaker vessel.

5. Protect and Care for Her

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

1 Peter 3:7

(a) Protect her from the strain of housework.

(b) Protect her from the attacks of relatives and friends.

(c) She is more susceptible to attacks (especially psychological and emotional).[8]

Protect her from these:

(d) Help to organise her life—timetable, planning.

6. Work Hard to Provide for the Needs of the Family

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

1 Timothy 5:8

The husband must provide these needs:

(a) Spiritual needs: The Word of God, prayer, church.

(b) Physical needs: Food, clothing, education, insurance, accommodation.

7. Provide for Her Sexually

Understand that the wife also has sexual needs.

Chapter 12

Duties of the Wife

Eve was created to be Adam's HELPMEET. Therefore, whatever the woman does, her motive must be to help, project, motivate, uplift and promote her husband.[1]

1. Love Your Husband

Some women do not love the men they marry. The reasons for this may include the following:

(a) She married him because of the material benefits she wanted to acquire.

(b) She might have been growing old so she accepted the marriage as a desperate measure.

(c) She might have gotten herself pregnant by accident.

If any of these negative reasons was what drove you to marry, you can ask God for forgiveness and pray for grace to do what his Word teaches you to do as a Christian spouse.

It is very important for a wife to love her husband otherwise it will be very difficult to perform the marital responsibilities of submission, sex etc.[2]

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children.

Titus 2:4

2. Submit to Your Husband

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as

the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Ephesians 5:22-24

Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes.

1 Peter 3:1-3 (New International Version)

The Bible teaches clearly that wives should submit to their husbands.[3] Christian wives will do well to obey this Scripture.

3. Keep the Home

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Titus 2:4,5

4. Provide Sexually for Your Husband

Every wife has a God-given duty to satisfy the sexual needs of her husband. Usually, the need to have sex is greater for a man than for a woman, and many wives find their husbands' persistent advances for sex a bother. A wife should know and understand that if she does not take care of her husband's sexual needs, she may push him to seek fulfilment elsewhere and this will lead to a lot of heartache and pain. It is therefore in her own interest to satisfy him sexually at home.

5. Provide Nice Food for Your Husband

Food is also another thing which is very important to a man. It is the duty of a wife to produce nice and tasty meals for her husband and the rest of the household.

She must introduce a lot of variety in the food she prepares and be very innovative. Cooking is an art which must be learnt and mastered!

6. Provide Nice Supportive Company and Friendship

(a) Chat with him when he is quiet.

(b) Encourage him when he is down.

These simple acts help to strengthen the friendship and companionship in the marriage.[4]

7. Be a Virtuous Woman

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways

of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Proverbs 31:10-31

You should now have a comprehensive study of Proverbs 31:10-31:5

(a) Verse 11 Her husband has confidence in her and he does not lack anything of value (such as food and sex).

(b) Verse 12 She is helpful and encourages her husband.

(c) Verse 13/14 She is hard-working.

(d) Verse 15 She rises early to pray and work.

(e) Verse 16 She is a good planner. Considers before buying.

(f) Verse 17 She is not lazy. Does not leave all work for the maid.

(g) Verse 18 She helps out financially when possible.

(h) Verse 19 She learns a craft or trade. e.g. baking, serving, etc.

(i) Verse 20 She is kind. Does not drive away visitors—is hospitable.

(j) Verse 22 She dresses well to look attractive to her husband.

(k) Verse 23 She makes sure her husband is presentable and neat.

(l) Verse 26 She speaks with wisdom, does not nag.

It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

Proverbs 21:9

She does not argue or disagree vehemently.

…the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

Proverbs 19:13

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

Proverbs 25:24

A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

Proverbs 27:15

(m) Verse 27 She is not idle nor a busybody.

(n) Verse 28 Her children and husband are proud of her.

(o) Verse 30 Above all, she is committed to the Lord.[5]

Chapter 13

The Total Wife

The Roles of a Wife

1. A Christian

(a) You must pray.

(b) Read your Bible.

(c) Have/attend fellowship.

(d) Be involved in church activities.[1]

2. A Worker/Student

You must put in your best and attain good results in any endeavour.

3. A Mother

(a) As a mother you must be loving and patient.[2]

(b) Be prepared to talk/converse with the child(ren).

(c) Help out with homework.

4. A Sex Partner

(a) You must always be eager and ready to meet the needs of your partner and your own.[3]

(b) You must initiate sex sometimes.

(c) Remember that you will only be doing your God-given duty.

5. A Cook

(a) Produce good food always/regularly with variety and zeal.

(b) Ensure that you adjust to your husband's work schedule, no matter how "ungodly" his hours of eating may be.

(c) As much as possible, serve him yourself and sit by him to keep him company, even if you have had your meal earlier.

6. A Homekeeper

(a) Your home must be very tidy and clean, not only for visitors but for your husband and children as well.

7. A Hostess

(a) You must try to be as hospitable as possible. Be a friend to your husband's friends.

(b) Cheerfulness and a happy disposition at all times is an asset.

6 Principles for a Total Wife

1. All my roles are equally important.

2. I cannot and will not leave out any of these roles.

3. I will plan in advance for all things.

4. I will organize, delegate or get help and use it when I have to.

5. I will have a positive attitude towards sex.

6. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13).

Chapter 14

Home Keeping and House Helps

Introduction

A wife must make up her mind to be an excellent home keeper. When this is done properly it enhances her image as a wife and mother, and that of her husband.[1]

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Titus 2:5

What Are the Components of Housekeeping?

1. Cooking and provision of food

The saying goes, “The way to a man’s heart, is through his stomach.”

(a) A wife must learn to cook and to do it properly. (It must be realised that not all women have had the benefit of living with a mother who took time to teach them how to cook).

(b) After taking time to learn how to cook, she must actually do it. Confidence comes with knowledge and experience.

(c) Be innovative and introduce a lot of variety, e.g. know what to do when taken by surprise.

2. Hospitality

(a) Be ready to receive and entertain guests at anytime and at your expense.

(b) Make people feel wanted in your home and assured that they are not a bother.

(c) Remember that hospitality goes hand in hand with providing food for the visitor(s).

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Luke 10:38-42

(d) Let your visitor(s) feel that you are blessed with the visit.

(e) Do not be overenthusiastic to impress visitors at the expense of your home and husband!

3. Keeping the house

(a) Ensure the laundry is done.

(b) Keep your kitchen very clean.

(c) Keep your bathrooms/toilets clean.

(d) Your living room must always be ready to receive visitors.

(e) The bedding must be changed as often as possible.

(f) Don’t wait for essentials to run out completely before replenishment e.g. toiletries, milk, bread, sugar, margarine, or butter etc.

4. House Helps

Having a house help is a reality that couples must contend with.

Indeed they (house helps) could be described as a necessary evil. At a certain point in the marriage it may be necessary to obtain a helping hand to enable the wife to be free to do other important things e.g. attend church services, concentrating on secular work etc.

7 Things Every Couple Should Know about House Helps

1. The phenomenon of house helps is one that many find very difficult to handle. You must learn about it.

2. Many house helps come untrained and are sometimes unruly. They must therefore be trained and even tamed.

3. The wife is the one who will usually deal with the help. She must thus be fair and firm in her dealings.

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Colossians 4:1

4. Be aware that female house helps may pose a sexual danger in the house for your husband. As such you must take certain precautions and institute some measures:

(a) Let her dress properly, e.g., wear bras, no wearing of sexy shorts, transparent nighties etc.

(b) When the house help is male, the wife must be careful about the things she wears in his presence.

(c) The female house help must not replace the wife in any way. Note that a gradual replacement in any form can become a permanent (total) replacement.

And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

Genesis 30:11-12

(d) This is because service is beautiful, so as the house help

continues to do it for the husband, she gradually becomes attractive to him.

5. Don't easily dismiss stories of affairs between a husband and the maid. These things are real.

6. Some maids come into the home with an agenda to take over. This may be physical or spiritual (wizards & witches). You must therefore be very spiritual in choosing a house help.

7. In spite of all the negative things that can be said about maids/ helps, a good one is very helpful for your continued activity in church and in other areas and also to help you fulfil all your other roles.[2]

Chapter 15

Principles of Finance in Marriage

Introduction

There are many references in the Bible regarding the importance of money. However, the Bible also warns us about coveting after money, which is the root of all evil.

For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

Ecclesiastes 7:12

A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

Ecclesiastes 10:19

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1 Timothy 6:10

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

Haggai 2:8

1. The Importance of Money in Every Venture

(a) Money is the medium of exchange for everything.

(b) As long as we live in this world, it is indispensable.

2. Attitude to Money in the Home

(a) Discuss money openly. Aim at transparency/openness in everything, especially in money matters.

(b) Avoid selfishness.

(c) Note that you (both) are only stewards of God's money.

i. Spend it according to God's wishes and God's Word.

ii. You are accountable to Him.

(d) Manage your finances properly by budgeting.[1] These areas can guide you:

i. God first (first and best fruits (tithes), offerings).

ii. Savings or some investment.

iii. Addressing your NEEDS, not your wants.

iv. Liabilities/obligations (debts, bills, remittances, blessing others).

v. Extra (miscellaneous) to afford for flexibility.[2]

vi. Buying food in bulk saves money and reduces financial stress.

3. Understand the Realities of Housekeeping Money (Chop Money)

(a) The mode of its operation must be discussed and mutually agreed upon.

(b) The husband must not be detached from realities while the wife must also not be prodigal in her spending.

4. Understand Financial Headship

(a) Headship of the home extends to finances as well. Therefore, no matter who earns more, the man must rule the finances of the home with wisdom and fairness.[3] He must have a clear vision or foresight for the home to better the lot of the family,

e.g. plans to own a house someday.

(b) As a financial head, he must avoid stinginess, meanness, and irresponsibility.

5. Avoid Lack of Money

Lack of money must not be a permanent situation in the home. It is important to be mindful of the potential problems associated with lack of money, such as tension, quarrels, misunderstanding, mistrust, suspicion. etc These should not necessarily occur in your home.

6. Know the Dangers of Covetousness

This condition normally arises when wives/husbands compare their property or children with those of others. It leads to:

i. Dissatisfaction in the wife/husband.

ii. Unreasonable demands being made.

iii. Murmuring.

iv. Misspending.

v. Borrowing to maintain a certain lifestyle

7. Know the Dangers of Comparison

(a) Don't compare yourself with any other family.

...but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

2 Corinthians 10:12

(b) Accept realities.[4]

SECTION 5

UNDERSTANDING THE TEMPERAMENTS

Chapter 16

Introduction to the Temperaments

The temperament is the basic template with which you are created. You are created by God with certain tendencies, natural strengths and weaknesses.[1] There is a difference between temperament and character. In this chapter, you must understand this basic difference.

The temperament is God's method of creating variety. Some people are born with natural tendencies for leadership or joviality. Others are born with a natural tendency to flow along and to be easy-going. This is the basic structure of your emotional make-up.

So what is the character of a person? The character is the personality which is affected by the influences of this life. The character of a person is therefore the product of his personality plus all external influences.[2]

Character = Personality + External Influence

External Influence = Parental Training + School and Education + Influence of friendships + The Church + The Pastor + The Bible + The Environment + The Community + Life's Experiences + Maleness or Femaleness + Christian Commitment + Background

This means that everyone can have a good character because the character is a product of many controllable variables. When a person is influenced by the Word of God, the natural weaknesses of his personality will be stemmed. Also, the strengths of his or her personality will be augmented by the Word of God.[3] The Word of God will encourage you, for instance, to improve your leadership skills to help the people of God even though you may not be a natural-born leader.

The Word of God will teach the sanguine personality for example, not to be unfaithful, which may be his natural tendency. As we

study this topic, you will see how everyone is born with natural tendencies. Perhaps you will discover that you have a sanguine personality or a melancholic one. These are realities.

Some people don't like to accept the truth about temperaments and the teachings on them. However, the reality of varied personalities cannot be avoided. It stares us in the face all the time. What we must do is to allow the Word of God to lift us higher in the strengths of our diagnosed personalities. We must also fear the reality that we have a tendency to walk in the weaknesses of our personalities. We must therefore be conscious of these realities and fight every negative tendency that is common to our personalities.

The most powerful single human influence on any person's behaviour is his temperament, which is usually a combination of at least two temperaments—one primary and the other secondary. People are subconsciously attracted to another person's strengths that correspond to their weaknesses.[4]

In Proverbs 30:11-14, the writer Agur, to whom many Bible scholars attribute the chapter, recognizes four specific kinds of people: melancholic, phlegmatic, sanguine and choleric. Unfortunately, Agur only viewed them in negative expressions because people are usually more easily diagnosed through their weaknesses than their strengths. He also describes man in the state that he is born—Proverbs 30:11-14 (New American Standard Bible).

There is a generation that curse their father, And bless not their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, And (yet) are not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, oh how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are (as) swords, and their jaw teeth (as) knives, To devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

Melancholic: There is a kind of man…who curses his father, And does not bless his mother (Proverbs 30:11).

Phlegmatic: There is a kind …who is pure in his own eyes, yet is not washed from his filthiness (Proverbs 30:12).

Sanguine: There is a kind…oh how lofty are his eyes, And his eyelids are raised in arrogance (Proverbs 30:13).

Choleric: There is a kind of man…whose teeth are like swords, And his jaw teeth like knives, to devour the afflicted from the earth, And the needy from among men (Proverbs 30:14).

The combination of your parents' or grandparents' genes and chromosomes at the time of conception determines your basic temperament. This is what is responsible for your actions, reactions and emotional responses.

Six Reasons Why Every Christian Should Know about His/Her Temperament

(a) Knowing about your temperament will show you what kind of person you are naturally inclined to marry.

(b) Knowing about your temperament will make you aware of your natural strengths.

(c) Knowing about your temperament will make you aware of your natural weaknesses.

(d) Knowing about your temperament will help you to accept and to flow with your marriage partner.

(e) Knowing about your temperament will help you to accept and to flow with the people you work with or relate to.

(f) Knowing about your temperament will help you to forgive people who hurt you.

Chapter 17

What it Means to Have a Sanguine Husband or Wife

Strengths of a Sanguine Husband

1. Loud

2. Emotionally warm—Sompa Sanguine if he is married to Mansa Melancholy is likely to enjoy an emotionally surcharged relationship because they both possess the richest emotions of the four basic temperaments.

3. Friendly—Sompa is an enthusiastic, feeling-oriented person who can easily be moved to tears by the sad mood of his friends or to joy and excitement by the happiness of others.

4. Happy

5. Outgoing—Sompa is the fun-loving, super-extrovert with personality, charisma and charm to burn. If he attends a party he is the life of it.

6. Talkative

7. Enthusiastic

8. Stimulating

9. Communication & Fellowship

• He is expressive in public—in storytelling, conversations, exaggerations and actions. He is likely to get a lot of public attention.

• Rarely says vicious things about others.[1]

Weaknesses of a Sanguine Husband

1. Lacks discipline

2. Prone to exaggerate

3. Disorganized

4. Hot-tempered

5. Prone to unfaithfulness [because of his instability]

6. Weak-willed

7. Finances

• He is indisciplined with money and spends money anyhow.

• He is unconstrained and usually overspends.

• He can be poor, even with good opportunities.

8. Emotions

He is too emotional [he cries one moment, and the next moment it is over].

• He is angered easily but also forgives very quickly.

• He can be moody.

9. Spirituality

• He is disorganized spiritually.

• He can be very carnal and fleshly.

10. Commitment

• He loses interest easily.

• He can be unfaithful and weak-willed, especially if his wife is uninteresting.

11. Home

• He is untidy—throws things about.

• He is dirty.

12. Relationships

• He may enter and leave a relationship easily.[2]

Strengths of a Sanguine Wife

1. Sena Sanguine is adorable and popular—she was probably a cheerleader in school.

2. She is the easiest personality to spot in a crowd—she talks a great deal, usually laughs loudly, and has many gestures, like waving her arms in the air.

3. She is always in the middle of the action, mixing and mingling with people, and enter¬taining them with grand stories that may bear little or no resemblance to the truth.

4. Other personalities watching her wonder if she ever gets tired.

5. She is good at networking—she is relationship-wise and knows virtually everyone.

6. She's everyone's best friend and sincerely loves them all. However, she has an extra special place for friends who adore and idolize her. She thrives on compliments.

7. She doesn't get worried when she is not worshipped. When her feelings are hurt she doesn't hold a grudge.

8. She is quick to apologize when she realizes she's done wrong.

9. She's spontaneous and excitable and can decide on fun on the spur of the moment.

10. She's a talkative—she is usually a good speaker or great teacher because she can talk for hours on a topic she has little or not much information about.

11. She's the life of the party—she likes to throw parties and to attend them. At the party all action revolves around her. She usually arrives late at the party, because she either loses the directions to the party or forgets about it.

12. Her primary goal in life is to have fun. When things get too serious, she tries to lighten up her environment.

13. She always expects the best from people and from life.

14. Motivator—can motivate others to action and is fabulous at dreaming up wild schemes for someone else to implement. She can convince normally sane people to do things they wouldn't normally do.

15. She is usually fond of bright colours.

16. Creative—she is a very creative dresser and likes new hairstyles and colours. Her crea tivity may extend to baking, decorating, and entertaining. She is good at inventing homes, crafts and projects for kids.

17. Accepting—she lives by the principle "live and let live". She doesn't spend her time thinking about what is wrong with people she meets. She rather focuses on what is right about people and about life.

18. She accepts the fact that everyone has faults and everyone makes mistakes. She has no desire to judge others and this attitude makes her popular.

19. She has a seemingly childlike faith and trust in human beings—she always believes the best about others.

20. She rarely spreads vicious rumours although she likes to talk. She easily entrusts her life to God and is therefore seldom plagued by worry and fear as the other temperaments. She lives one day at a time.[3]

Weaknesses of a Sanguine Wife

1. Too Talkative—often wonders why everyone else is quiet all the

time. Because she doesn't pay adequate attention to details she may say the wrong things and embarrass those close to her.

2. She tends to exaggerate for effect and therefore is seen as not telling the truth.

3. Permissive—she may allow her children to behave anyhow and may not take danger signs in marriage and life in general seriously.

4. She tends to avoid confrontation—since her goal in life is to have fun, she puts off dealing with problems.

5. Forgetful—they do not remember appointments and schedules.

6. Unreliable—she often gets excited about a role but is not around when it is being implemented.

7. She lacks attention to detail—she makes commitments without thinking about what it will take to follow through. She leaves a trail of broken promises.

8. Fussy—she fusses and complains when she has to work a little. She doesn't like to work.

9. Messy Housekeeper—she never seems to know where anything is because she is disorganized. She has a hard time finding her curlers, make-up bag, keys, etc. She rarely has anything clean and tidy. She doesn't enjoy cleaning the house and usually has an untidy bedroom.

10. Overwhelming—some people can't stand sanguines. They find them too overwhelming.

11. Seems phony—other temperaments may misunderstand her motives. She can appear phony even when she has good intentions. [4]

Chapter 18

What it Means to Have a Choleric Husband or Wife

Strengths of a Choleric Husband

1. Kofi Choleric, is the hot, quick, active, practical, strong-willed temperament type.

2. He is self-sufficient and very independent.

3. He tends to be decisive and opinionated and finds it easy to make decisions for himself and for others, and often needs to be in charge and in control.

4. He is an extrovert but not an intense one.

5. He thrives on activity—in fact to him life is activity.

6. He does not need to be stimulated by his environment but stimulates his environment with endless ideas, plans, goals and ambitions.

7. He rarely engages in aimless activity because of his practical, keen mind.

8. He is capable of making sound, instant decisions and planning worthwhile projects.

9. He never wavers under the pressure of what others think.

10. He takes a firm stand on issues and often crusades against things like social injustices.

11. He is not discouraged by problems, but rather problems encourage him to find solutions.

12. He has a dogged determination which usually allows him to succeed where others have failed because others become

discouraged and quit whereas the choleric doggedly keeps pushing ahead.

13. He is a born leader known as a Strong Natural Leader (SNL) in the business world.

14. He seeks useful and productive values in life—if he is a Christian he is usually a very dedicated one.

15. He is a very open and honest person, sometimes to a fault.

16. Finances:

• He is an achiever and successful.

• He is a great provider.

• He does not want his wife and children to be in need, and does not understand why there should be a problem after he has done all these.

17. Spirituality:

• He is an achiever, a pioneer, and a builder.

• He is hard-working.

• He has a tendency to believe more in his strength than in God.

18. Commitment:

• He is very committed.

• He has a dogged determination that makes him achieve, even if he is not gifted.[1]

Weaknesses of a Choleric Husband

1. His emotional nature is the least developed part of his temperament.

2. He does not sympathize easily with others and does not naturally show or express compassion.

3. He is often embarrassed or disgusted by the tears of others and is usually insensitive to their needs.

4. He reflects little appreciation for music or the fine arts unless his secondary temperament traits are those of a melancholic.

5. His most serious weakness is anger.

6. Cholerics are extremely hostile people.

7. They use their wrath as a weapon to get what they want because they come to realize that other people are usually afraid of their strong outbursts.

8. He may willfully cause pain to others and enjoy it.

9. His wife is usually afraid of him and he tends to terrify his children.

10. He is a door-slammer, table-pounder and horn-blower. Any person who gets in his way, retards his progress or fails to perform up to the level of his expectations bears the brunt of his wrath.

11. Cholerics tend to carry a grudge for a long time.

12. He often falls prey to ulcers by the time he is 40 years.

13. Cholerics are sarcastic and can make scathing remarks which can wither the insecure or devastate the less combative.

14. He usually leaves a path of damaged psyches and fractured egos because the other temperament types wilt under his treatment of them.

15. He is the most unaffectionate of all the temperaments and becomes emotionally spastic at the thought of any public show of affection.

16. Marital affection to him means a kiss at the wedding and on every 5th anniversary thereafter!

17. They are so strong-willed and so bent on doing what they want

to do that they may resort to tricks to have their own way.

18. Emotions

• He finds it difficult to relate to or understand emotional things.

• He has a problem with anger and forgiveness.

19. He may find himself thinking more in terms of “what I have done” than in terms of the grace of God.

20. He is likely to be dogmatic in his stance and will carry out his opinion without thinking much about how his partner feels.

21. Is an emotional extremist, that is, either hot or cold, and can get furiously angry or explode.[2]

Strengths of a Choleric Wife

1. Korkor Choleric is a take-charge-woman—she tells everyone else what to do and is commanding in her style.

2. Shake-things-up, make-things-happen kind of woman.

3. She is very energetic and outgoing and is always up to something new.

4. Is bossy, can be overly aggressive and domineering. She is often considered a threat by other men and resented and judged by other women who tend to want to cut her down to size.

5. Courageous—she believes she can do whatever she sets her mind to. She’s got nerve that can be used in powerful ways for good. No matter what the obstacles, she will hold firmly to her belief that she can do it.

6. Determined—she views life as a series of problems to solve or challenges to overcome,

7. Often struggles after leaving the workplace to stay home with her children, because she thinks there is nothing specific to accomplish; with housework nothing is ever finished. This is because she thrives

on the battle to battle, challenge to challenge, conquest to conquest routine of the workplace.

8. Crusader—notices wrongs and injustices of life and feels compelled to set things right. She is the one who crusades for change.

9. Productive—since the choleric woman is so hard-working, goal-oriented and energetic, she tends to lead an exceptionally productive life. Many of them have successful, high-powered careers. They usually crave more than just being wives and mothers. Because of their need to be productive they tend to neglect their families.

10. Open and honest—You don't have to wonder what they are thinking or feeling because they will let you know right up front whether you want to know or not. Often she has excellent insight that is ignored because someone doesn't like the way it was presented.

11. Effective Disciplinarian—Spells out exactly what she expects and carries herself with an air of confident authority that children respect. Her children are usually exceptionally well-behaved. Often used powerfully by God—very often have brilliant ideas and are absolutely right when they propose solutions to problems but people don't want to listen to them or implement their ideas. People often delight in actively opposing their plans. They're often dedicated Christians.

12. She is a forceful woman with many goals in mind. She may help with the finances of the home.[3]

Weaknesses of a Choleric Wife

1. Unpopular—may be greatly admired at a distance but disliked by people around her.

2. Mean—may appear angry, distant and unapproachable even when she is not in a particularly bad mood. She may just be so preoccupied with her own agenda that frankly she doesn't even notice you.

3. Gets angry quickly—she can be mean to her husband, children and even total strangers. She thinks the planet is populated by incompetent fools whom she merely tolerates at best. She will often control her family by fear and intimidation. She can be harsh and may hurt people's feelings with tough language and a harsh unloving attitude. She may also use her mean streak to control her husband especially if she married a phlegmatic man, which is often the case.

4. Self-Centred—she's interested in just herself.

5. Uses people—doesn't take time to make friends. Is not interested in the two-way give and take relationship required to maintain a long-term friendship. Her projects and accomplishments keep her busy enough. She's happy for you to help her; she'll ask for favours, she'll call you to report her accomplishments etc. She tends to view people as tools to accomplish her goals and objectives. In her mind projects are more important than people. This attitude leads to conflicts.

6. Impulsive—she's often too impulsive. She takes strong actions to get the results she's after but will leave the end to be finished by others.

7. Workaholic—she works beyond working hours, yet when it comes to housework and the more mundane tasks of life and motherhood, she suddenly behaves like a lazy person. She is in actual fact conserving her energy for what she deems important.

8. Bossy—she comes across as the bossiest, most annoying, know-it-all personality on the planet. She is a woman who likes to take charge.

9. She is not very domesticated.

11. She is not tender. She is not good at demonstrating love and affection; may not show much feeling or be very caring about her husband, workers and children.

12. She is frank and has a sharp tongue.

• She may appear to be insubordinate.

• She is very critical, even in the area of sex.

13. A choleric wife may be more pleasing to her boss at work or to her pastors, because she achieves a lot. However, were the boss to marry her, he may not be able to live with her!

14. She is a strong woman who tries to dominate and lead her husband in everything.

• She may not consult him when taking certain major decisions.

• She naturally tells everybody else what to do.

15. She may have a hot temper.

16. She may be very unforgiving towards her husband.

17. She may be so active at home pursuing countless activities that her spouse may feel unwanted. She may even find activities to do in the night.

18. Doesn't take time for real conversation and is easily threatened by questions.

19.Is usually not very popular because other males feel threatened by her and she is often resented and judged by other women. [4]

Chapter 19

What it Means to Have a Melancholic Husband or Wife

Strengths of a Melancholic Husband

1. Mensa Melancholic is analytical, self-sacrificing, gifted and a perfectionist.

2. He has a very sensitive emotional nature.

3. He derives enjoyment from the fine arts.

4. He is a very faithful friend but does not make friends easily.

5. He seldom pushes himself to meet people but rather lets them come to him.

6. He is the most dependable of all the temperaments because of his perfectionist tendencies.

7. He has a strong desire to be loved by others.

8. Because he is analytical he diagnoses accurately the obstacles and dangers of any project he has a part in planning. This makes him not so enthusiastic to start a new project.

9. He may occasionally produce some great work of art but such accomplishments are followed by great bouts of depression.

10. He finds his greatest meaning in life through personal sacrifice and usually chooses a difficult vocation involving sacrifice.

11. No temperament has so much natural potential when energized by the Holy Spirit. He can fulfil his potential by thinking of the positive aspects of life and by being a thankful praiser.

12. He may be rich because of self-sufficiency and hard work.

13. He is a listener.

14. He may be dedicated and self-sacrificing.

15. He is faithful and loyal, making him productive.

16. He is very tidy.

17. May be so consumed with looking for the perfect partner that he may be slow in choosing one.[1]

Weaknesses of a Melancholic Husband

1. His first reaction to anything is negative. He suffers from negative thoughts and worsens the problem by verbalizing them and this devastates his wife, children and friends.

2. His temperament is termed “the dark temperament” because he suffers from depression often.

3. He is constantly examining his spiritual life and coming up short in his own mind, even though he is most likely to be more devoted than others.

4. He lacks confidence.

5. He needs to be motivated externally by God, by others or by projects. Most of the prophets in the Bible appear to have been melancholic e.g. Moses and Elijah.

6. He is subject to mood swings and can be very sensitive.

• He is prone to be an introvert and also has a variety of moods.

• He may act extroverted at times and be gloomy and depressed at other times.

• When he is gloomy, he becomes withdrawn and antagonistic.

7. He may be stiff and calculating and not generous.

8. He keeps a lot within, which comes out suddenly.

9. He sees the negative side of things and is critical, making it difficult to stay with him.

10. He may not talk much at home.

11. He needs a lot of love.

- Disappointing experiences make him reluctant to take people at face value.
- He is often suspicious when others seek him out or shower him with affection.
- He needs to be told he is wanted and loved.

12. He may appear unbearable.

13. He finds it difficult to forgive.

14. He is very choosy about dressing, colours and what to eat.

15. He is picky and constantly arranging things. He resents a wife who is untidy.[2]

Strengths of a Melancholic Wife

1. Mansa Melancholic is a meticulous housekeeper—she likes to create and maintain the ideal home. She's usually a fabulous decorator and gourmet cook. She approaches household chores in a well-organized and self-disciplined fashion. She doesn't wait till she's getting a visitor before she cleans.

2. Organized—Her organizational skills extends beyond her home. It extends to the office, home, business or church. Her desk is usually in perfect order. The drawers show that she is a melancholic. She carries a daily planner and keeps records of things like car repairs. She is the kind who invites to dinner and waits for a return invitation, then invites you again.

3. She reads up and keeps a record on every topic and can therefore give advice on everything.

4. She is concerned about her family's health. She will make sure vitamins and other medicines are taken diligently.

5. Perfectly groomed—she always looks perfectly put together. Her appearance is neat, fashionable, and she is a person who is well-groomed and does all to keep even her small children looking perfect.

6. Wonderful hostess—she likes to prepare food, etc. for others.

7. Detail-oriented—usually reads instruction manuals that go with appliances. That is why her appliances last longer.

8. She likes to do things the right way and places great emphasis on what worked in the past.

9. In her Christian walk, she has a consistent quiet time and systematically cultivates the spiritual disciplines that lead to a deeper Christian life.

10. Thoughtful—she remembers birthdays and holidays with cards and gifts and not the kind of gifts you grab off the shelf on short notice. She gives gifts that were carefully chosen and purchased weeks in advance.

11. Frugal—extensively frugal. It doesn't matter how much money she has, she wants to spend it wisely.

12. Careful decision-maker—she is very cautious when making decisions and may be considered slow by others. She investigates every possible angle. Often, she can avoid the problem most people fall into because she makes wise decisions in the first place and averts problems before they begin.

13. Sophisticated—instead of watching shallow films she has her children watching classic films. She reads documented stuff and not frivolous material.

14. She is tidy and well-organized.

15. She is intelligent.

16. She is a very loyal and dedicated person.[3]

Weaknesses of a Melancholic Wife

1. She sets unrealistic standards for everything from household chores to academic and sports performances. Because of this, she is likely to create a great deal of stress for herself and those close to her.

2. Unpopular—since the melancholic is very quiet and thoughtful she can come across as cold and distant which can make her somewhat unpopular although in reality she may be timid and shy.

3. She is cautious in making friends because she has been hurt by disappointing friend¬ships in the past and wants to guard her heart.

4. She is often very guarded with her personal life and her emotions—for fear that if she gets too close her imperfections may show up.

5. Cautious in making friends, because the perfect friend is not easy to come by. When those close to her don't live up to her expectations (like listening to her endless tales of woe told with painstaking detail, knowing when and why she is depressed; being able to figure out why she is depressed, when she is depressed, expecting you to remember her birthday) she can become extremely bitter.

6. Rigid—she demands strict adherence to her many, many rules and principles. For her, there is usually one way of doing the right thing.

7. She can be a tough taskmaster towards family and friends. She sometimes gets so busy organizing how life should be that she forgets to enjoy life.

8. Prone to the blues—plans the day and doesn't want anything to upset her plans and schedule, when that happens she gets frustrated and discouraged and therefore depressed.

9. Unforgiving—she remembers details of wrongdoing and is the type who says to her husband, "Oh yeah, how about the time on

July 9, 1980, when you ….” and then goes on to elaborate in accurate detail about the offence.

• Like choleric wives, she has a problem with forgiveness.[4]

10. Cheapskate—they can be so consumed when saving money that they may end up saving in unnecessary ways that generate unnecessary hardships.

11. She has extreme mood swings.

> • She can be as exciting and stimulating as anyone else in life or in sex.
>
> • She can also show absolutely no interest in anyone or anything, including love.

12. She is not interested in very frequent sex, although she does not mind occasional good shows. She is likely to become interested in sex, only when she needs to get pregnant, then becomes uninterested when it is achieved.

13. She is the type of wife who would, most likely, reward or punish you with sex because the setting is not perfect, everything is not in place, and so she cannot flow.

14. She is most likely to be over-modest about life, sex and her body. She may use religious arguments to avoid sex.

15. With her, little issues turn into huge problems.

16. She greatly revenges for little things. She feels things should be done in another way: why so late, why in the morning, why have you not had a bath, etc.

17.She is often jealous of her husband’s friendliness to others.

> • It is common after a social gathering, for her to go home in icy silence, very angry and accusative against her spouse for being friendly and chatty to all the others at the gathering, because she often marries a man who is outgoing and friendly to everyone (a sanguine).

- She accuses her husband of flirting.

- Since her husband's male ego gets little praise at home, he unwisely seeks it at social gatherings and he may often think, "Nothing I ever do satisfies that woman."

18. She is prone to self-pity and depression. She can descend into depression and lack of interest in life due to a slight rejection.

19. She is unable to enjoy life, happiness and the peace and love that God brings to her because she focuses on imperfections.

20. A melancholic woman's biggest problem in life is her tendency toward self-pity. A slight rejection can make her follow self-pitying thoughts into depression until she is not interested in love or anything else.

21. She finds it difficult to accept her husband as he is, without making major changes to his life and activities. She finds it difficult to allow God to change her spouse in his time.

22. She is an inhibited and restrained person, unable to give much love. She needs to learn that when she sows [love, friendliness], she will reap [love and friendliness] in return.

Notes

1. Tim LaHaye, I Love You Buy Why Are We So Different? (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1991), 44, 46; Joyce Meyer, Help Me I'm Married! (Fenton, Missouri: Warner Books, 2000), 227.

2. Tim LaHaye, I Love You But Why Are We So Different? (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1991), 44, 46. Ibid.,13 - 17.

Joyce Meyer, Help Me, I'm Married! (Fenton, Missouri: Warner Books, 2000), 227.

Chapter 20

What it Means to Have a Phlegmatic Husband or Wife

Strengths of a Phlegmatic Husband

1. Fiifi Phlegmatic is the easiest person to get along with and is by nature the most likeable of all the temperaments.

2. He is calm and unruffled and never seems agitated no matter the circumstances around him.

3. He is consistent every time he is seen.

4. He feels much more emotion than appears on the surface.

5. He has the capacity to appreciate the fine arts and the better things of life.

6. He does not lack friends because he enjoys people and has a natural dry sense of humour.

7. He is the type of individual who can make a crowd of people shake with laughter and yet never smile.

8. He is capable of seeing something humorous in others and their actions and so maintains a positive approach to life.

9. He has a retentive memory and is capable of being a fine imitator.

10. He usually makes fun of the other temperament kinds.

11. The phlegmatic tends to be a spectator in life and tries not to get very involved with the activities of others.

12. He is not easy to motivate past his usual daily routine.

13. When roused to action however, he is capable and his efficient

qualities become apparent.

14. He will not volunteer for leadership on his own but when it is forced on him he proves to be a very capable leader.

15. He acts as a natural peacemaker.[1]

Weaknesses of a Phlegmatic Husband

1. He lacks drive and ambition.

2. He rarely exceeds the status quo and he always seems to do the expected.

3. He rarely initiates an activity and usually gives excuses in order to avoid getting involved with the activities of others.

4. He is selfish although this is usually not so obvious and he is so gracious and proper that few people are aware of it. Selfishness makes him self-indulgent and unconcerned about his family's need for activity.

5. He is miserly except for clothes for himself or tools for his work.

6. No-one can be more stubborn than a phlegmatic but he is so diplomatic about it that people do not realize it.

7. He never openly confronts another person or refuses to do something but will somehow manage not to do it.

8. In family situations, he often doesn't yell or argue; he just drags his feet or refuses to move.

9. He can be exasperating to a more aggressive partner by his passive, laid-back style. Sanguines and cholerics particularly struggle with phlegmatic spouses because they are used to making quick and headstrong decisions.

10. A phlegmatic person could be mistaken for a Christian even as an unbeliever.

11. He is polite and diplomatic about the expression of the old

sinful nature.

12. One of his chief weaknesses is that he has very little motivation.

13. He is very fearful under the surface and this fear can cause many problems.

14. Phlegmatics are prone to procrastination.

15. Tend to make slow, methodical decisions which can enrage the other temperaments.

16. In marriage, it becomes very easy for a phlegmatic to give up all decision-making to his more powerful and lively spouse.

17. Finances:

•He is an unmotivated man.

•He is not likely to achieve much.

•He may not be rich, successful or progressive.

• He may often be miserly and not provide much.

19. Sex:

• He is unmotivated.

• He flows with whatever is given to him.

• He is more laid-back.

20. Communication & Fellowship:

• He is not likely to communicate the right things, e.g. he may use diplomacy at the expense of his family.

• He falls asleep the moment he sits down.

• He is not likely to take his family out.

21. Emotions:

• He is fearful of many things and prone to worry.

• He can be ruled by his wife.

22. Spirituality:

• He is unmotivated.

• He is laid-back and without drive.

• He is not one likely to start or create something.

23. Commitment:

• He may have several loyalties, yet is nicely and diplomatically balanced.

• He is not strongly attracted to anyone; you have to know him to know his real heart or loyalty.

24. Home:

• He is prone to procrastination and is likely to leave important things undone.

• He takes his time about things.

• He is stubborn.

25. Relationships:

• He may never propose marriage, and may never marry.

26. Children:

• He is not likely to be the one to discipline his children.

27. Attitude:

• He is kind and rarely gets angry.

• He has a way of getting what he wants done.

28. Headship:

• He refuses to take the lead.

• He refuses to take decisions.

• He can be stingy, stubborn and selfish in a diplomatic way.

• He can crawl into a shell of silence if things don't work out.[2]

Strengths of a Phlegmatic Wife

1. Afua Phlegmatic is comforting—doesn't draw attention to herself but draws hurting people to herself. This is because hurting people sense that they have found a safe listening ear. Even total strangers tend to open up to the phlegmatic woman telling her about their problems and being comforted by her.

2. Actually feels the pain of others.

3. She'll call you just to see if everything is okay.

4. Sympathetic listener with genuine concern for others.

5. Is able to listen to people's woes for hours on end without trying to fix you or interrupt your story.

6. Takes sincere delight in ministering to people's heartfelt needs.

7. Thoughtful—she thinks about others and what their needs may be and tries to help.

8. Attentive—loves sending notes and cards.

9. Loyal—a very loyal friend; once she's yours, she's yours for keeps. Steadfastly maintains deep, abiding relationships with a small circle of childhood friends.

10. May grow discouraged feeling that others don't reciprocate in friendship.

11. Peacemaker—rarely gets bogged down with inter-personal conflict. She thrives on harmony and will do whatever she can to

maintain it.

12. Is quick to adjust to people around her and never insists on having things her way. It is her sincere desire to please others.

13. Has a wonderful ability to see every side of an issue and to help others see the other person's view.

14. Her mediation skills are valuable in the church and on the job as well as in her neighbourhood.

15. Dependable—she will be there even in rough times.

16. Protective—over her children and family.

17. Takes time for the children—may have a large family.

18. Patient—not easily angered; willing to go with the flow and doesn't insist that things go her way.

19. Faithful—has an exceptional ability to absorb emotional pain and still maintain her commitment to another person. She would stick with a difficult marriage long after most women would have given up. But when she makes up her mind that it is over, it's really over.

20. Devoted caregiver—she is willing to set aside her own needs to meet the needs of others.

Phlegmatics are usually counsellors, teachers, nurses etc. They usually lead Bible studies or women's ministries.[3]

Weaknesses of a Phlegmatic Wife

1. Unenthusiastic—doesn't get overexcited over achievement and exploits. Her goal is to conserve her limited supply of energy. This lack of enthusiasm can cause significant conflict in her relationships with family and friends who may interpret it as a lack of love, admiration, concern, interest and can actually result in emotional damage to her loved ones.

2. Uninvolved—they can hide behind motherhood and use it as

justification for non-involvement.

3. Fearful—she is fearful and is plagued by “what ifs”. She can actually be paralyzed by fears and insecurities and this can mar her relationships.

4. Sluggish—she is not very big on work! She often looks for the barest minimum she can do and still get on. Her house can be disorganized but perhaps not to the extent of that of the sanguine. Phlegmatics can be addicted to TV and their sluggish lifestyle can lead to excessive weight gain.

5. Compromising—she’s a follower by nature and may compromise her standards to suit whoever she spends the most time with. Because of this, she can fall among bad company.

6. Avoids confrontation—she can make it easy for others to behave irresponsibly around her because she may condone certain behaviour just to please or to avoid confrontation. She has to learn to firmly and lovingly back away and allow people to reap the logical consequences of their choices.

7. Stubborn—She does not complain or argue but may quietly and unwaveringly stick to her guns, while the other temperaments go berserk over her refusal to co-operate.

8. She turns her attention to her children, if there are problems with her husband.

9. She is afraid of embarrassment, exposure and conflict. Therefore, she does not easily say unsavoury things about her marriage.

10. She is self-righteous, and often not spiritually keen. She is not keen on anything.

11. She is selfish:

• She cares for, protects and keeps to herself.

• This is a manifestation of a selfish life of concern about herself.

• She can cause people around her to resent her for being inward or

selfish.

12. She is unconcerned about her dressing.

13. She can be disorganized at home and neglect housecleaning:

• She is slothful.

• She is disorderly because she likes to have everything within easy reach.

14. She may find her active partner mean because he drags her to places with lots of activity and people when she just wants rest.

15. She needs a sense of worth. Phlegmatics feel inferior and unloved when there is constant criticism.

• She may easily assume guilt for all the problems in the marriage.

• She finds it hard to love someone whose main interest is making sure she is the one who is wrong. Phlegmatics wilt under criticism.

16. She may live in continual hurt, pain and confusion because phlegmatics like to avoid conflict.

17. She is difficult to arouse sexually:

• She rarely initiates sex on her own.

• She is passive, cadaveric.

• She does not introduce variety and needs to learn to be interested and exciting about sex.

18. She does not communicate the truth about her feelings:

• She can live a life of deception.

• She tries to get others to address her problems.

19. She can become passive in her marriage as time goes on.

20. She struggles with decision-making and as such feels unsure of

herself underneath the surface.

• Since phlegmatics hardly share their true feelings, she usually will not confront issues head on.

• She will often use subtle sarcasm and criticism to hurt her partner, sometimes in front of people.

21. She lacks motivation, loves procrastinating, and is prone to forget dates and appointments.

22. She is usually slower to stand up for herself and others, and is often slow to anger.

23. She waits for crisis before she acts, because she always hopes someone else will solve the situation or that it will all go away by itself.[4]

SECTION 6

THE PROBLEMS AND THE SOLUTIONS

Chapter 21

Problem-Solving in Marriage

Introduction

The home is a garden. Weeds keep cropping up in a garden that must be constantly removed, so that our planted seeds can grow well. Every normal marriage has problems and challenges. It is only when there is a fire that you see which of the sticks around you is actually a snake.

And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat…

Acts 28:3

In other words, in times of trouble, the character of a spouse shows clearly.

But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

1 Corinthians 7:28

Remember the prayer of St. Francis Xavier:

"God grant me the courage to change the things I can change; the serenity to accept the things I cannot change and the wisdom to know the difference."

Major Problem Areas in Marriage

(a) Communication

(b) Sex

(c) Money

(d) Temperament

(e) Children

(f) In-laws

(g) Job

(h) Housework

(i) Infidelity.

Approach

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Galatians 6:1

It is in the interest of married couples to do all they can to prevent problems from showing up in their marriages.

Preventive measures are always better than curative solutions to problems.

However, the reality of the marital relationship is that no matter what you do, issues crop up that lead to problems. If problems arise, your approach to solving them must be this:[1]

(a) Pray about the situation.

(b) Be positive that there is a solution.

(c) Bring up the issue (in the spirit of meekness—do not be confrontational).

(d) Identify the causes (sincerely). Get to the root, not the tip of the problem.

(e) If necessary, consult your pastors.

Methods of Solving Problems

1. Be ready to compromise.

There is no winner or loser in marriage, you are one flesh.[2] When there is a clear disagreement, the husband's decision must stand and the wife must support it even if he turns out to be wrong. However, the man must not be domineering. He must not be a dictator in his house.[3]

2. Things to avoid when solving problems:

(a) Do not shout.

(b) Do not share your problems with your relatives or friends.

(c) Do not break down in tears.

(d) Do not use sex as a weapon (do not refuse him/her).

(e) Do not refuse to eat prepared food.

(f) Never use the word DIVORCE in quarrels.

(g) Avoid the counsel of the ungodly.

3. Have a forgiving attitude and spirit.

Forgiveness is very essential for the survival of the marriage.[4] Do not be nice to outsiders, but impatient and inconsiderate to your spouse.

4. Be prepared to talk frankly about the issue.

The offended person must be willing to open up and share in love rather than nag, shout or bury things.

For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Job 32:18-20

5. The other party must be willing to accept fault and

apologise.

“I AM SORRY.” These three words can resolve almost all quarrels. Be humble and don’t find it difficult to apologise.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in “heaven forgive your trespasses.

Mark 11:25-26

6. Do not let any problem colour your future actions. [5]

Counsellors to note:

1. Our marriage counselling applies to the ideal couple who are both born-again Christians and submitted to the Word of God.

2. If both of them are not fully submitted to the pastors and the Church, you cannot really solve the problems.

3. If the person is not in your church, don’t waste much time because they are not fully submitted to you.

4. Don’t take sides in solving problems.

5. Don’t answer the question, “What should I do?” in a direct way. People will say you made them do whatever they did.

6. Don’t be so vague that people cannot understand what you are saying.

Chapter 22

In-Laws

1. Know that when you marry a person you marry him with his background, family situation, financial situation, health situation and all.

2. Your in-law is closely related to your spouse. They are his parents or guardians.

3. The Bible admonishes your spouse to honour his/her parents or parent figures and you must do the same.

Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Ephesians 6:2-3

4. Your in-laws are like adopted parents to you.[1]

5. You must believe God to love them unconditionally as in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 even when you think they don't like you.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

6. No spouse should make the home of his parents his real home. The Bible admonishes the couple to leave and cleave to each other. [2]

7. Try not to discriminate between parents as to care, upkeep, finances, etc.

8. Recognize the reality that not all sets of parents have the same needs, so do not try to make their needs identical. For example, one parent may need remittances but the other may need to be remembered only on birthdays.

9. Do not complain about your spouse to your parents. They are likely to be biased against him/her. Let love cover the multitude of your partner's faults and seek pastoral counsel when you need help.

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covers all sins.

Proverbs 10:12

10. Usually, the woman may prompt the husband on care for the home. He should provide these needs with love.

11. Remember that your newly created family comes first: He who does not care for his own household is worse than an infidel.[3]

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

1 Timothy 5:8

12. Know that your in-laws can do unacceptable things just like your parents. The difference is that you may not be able to tell your in-law your real sentiments without stirring up trouble; so learn to overlook certain things.

13. Be yourself with your in-laws so far as you are not offensive.

14. Do not allow your parents to develop a habit of saying bad things about your spouse to you directly or indirectly. You are one.

15. Your in-laws can pronounce a blessing on you depending on how you treat them. Naomi blessed her daughters-in-law when she had to return to her own people.[4]

And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to

her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

Ruth 1:8

Chapter 23

The Step Home

Living With a Spouse's Child or a Spouse's Relative

1. Know that it is not an ideal situation. The children in the house are not staying with their real father or mother.

2. Expect some challenges because you have to love a stranger. It may not be easy but it may be worth it.

3. Recognize that the fatherless or motherless have a special place in God's heart and He has said that He will personally fight those who oppress them.

Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

Exodus 22:22, 24

... thou art the helper of the fatherless. To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

Psalm 10:14,18

4. You married your spouse with this background. Accept it.

5. You must love them unconditionally (agape) without expecting a reward.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there

be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

6. Recognize that the son or daughter is closely related to your spouse and that he/she loves him/her. Consider Abraham's mood when he had to send Hagar and Ishmael away.

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Genesis 21:9-11

7. Decide on the involvement of the child's other parent before you marry. Minimum interference in your new home is advised. Frequent interaction between the child's parents is not necessary. If possible, get a neutral person to act as a liaison to avoid questions and mistrust.

8. Always endeavour to be a united couple in the eyes of the child.

9. Know the reality of a bitter stepchild.[1]

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Genesis 21:9

10. Believe God to fight certain battles for you.

11. Seek counsel when necessary.

12. Do not encourage or fan any rift between your spouse and the stepchild.[2]

13. Do not be seen to form a clique with your spouse's stepchild.

14. Accept the fact that children are not perfect creatures. Your own children may also be stubborn or full of mistakes. A stepchild needs

working on too. Handle him/her with love. Do not always take your spouse's correction of the stepchild as hatred. Allow your spouse to train the stepchild in accordance with biblical principles.[3]

Chapter 24

What Every Christian Should Know About Divorce

The Definition of Divorce

The word translated “divorce” in the New Testament is “apostasion”, which means, “a defection”. Imagine a soldier who has been enlisted and drafted in the army, who runs away without permission. He is a defector. If he is arrested he is likely to be shot. The dictionary meaning of defect is “to forsake a party”.

The Scriptures on Divorce

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Matthew 5:32

What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Mark 10:9

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

Romans 7:2

And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:10,11

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one?…That he might seek a godly seed…For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away:..

Malachi 2:14-16

Whose Fault Is Divorce?

(a) God places the responsibility of cleaving on the man. He leaves and cleaves (glues) to his wife.

(b) Divorce occurs when he is not able to cleave tightly enough to become inseparable.

(c) Marriage rests on the shoulders of the man, just the same way divorce also does.

(d) Whatever happens in the home is the man's responsibility, although it may not be his fault.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

When man fell and God came to the garden, He first called out to Adam and placed the responsibility for eating the fruit at his feet. There were no questions for the woman.[1]

Complications of Divorce

God, generally, does not like broken fellowship of any sort. The concept of a broken home or broken lives hurts God.[2]

(a) An unending hurt is inflicted.

The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore

leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

Proverbs 17:14

(b) A bitter personality is created.

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

Proverbs 18:14

(c) There is a permanent break-up of relationship/fellowship.

A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

Proverbs 18:19

(d) Destruction of happiness.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

e) A broken/wounded spirit and emotions:

i. Marriage involves emotions, so a breakdown leads to the tearing apart of soul ties.

ii. Both partners are often destroyed, sometimes beyond full recovery.

iii. Separation is the termination of a commitment with emotional involvement.

iv. Divorce is legalized separation.

v. A vow is unto death: Don't make it if you are not going to keep it.

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath

no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

Ecclesiastes 5:4,5

(f) Bitterness (long-standing and degenerate unforgiveness).

(g) Tremendous pain.

(h) A permanent scar.

(i) You will be handicapped. There are things you can't do well anymore.

(j) Distress—similar to the feeling of bereavement that follows the death of someone close to you.

(k) Depression:

i. Caused by contrasting how you thought things were going to be for the rest of your life and how they apparently will be following the divorce.

ii. Depression stems from feelings of rejection which can lead to withdrawal from everybody.[3]

Difficulties of Remarriage and Singlehood

(a) You will probably encounter the same problems again.

(b) You will always wonder whether you could not have made your marriage work.

(c) The children will be greatly affected and may become social deviants. This is very common.

(d) You may always suffer from the broken/wounded spirit, bitterness and deep seated resentment, which will have a very bad effect on your spiritual and prayer life.[4]

Predisposing Factors to Divorce

(a) Adultery—when adultery occurs, it leads to mistrust and eventually a breakdown of the whole marital union.

(b) Unresolved hurts and offences leading to a state of chronic unhappiness and depression.

(c) Violence in the marriage—where one party resorts to violence and sharp abusive words to resolve conflicts.

(d) Childlessness—some people allow a situation of childlessness to degenerate into a break-up of the relationship.

(e) Long separation—where one spouse travels to live in another country and the other is unable to join due to inability to obtain the necessary visa.

(f) Interference from relatives and friends:

i. Too much parental influence and control.

ii. Too many dependents from extended family members.

(g) A bad attitude—a persistent and deliberate bad attitude that cannot respond to advice, rebuke, admonishing or entreaties from anyone, including the pastors.[5]

SECTION 7

THE MASTER KEY OF ACCEPTANCE

Chapter 25

The Key of Acceptance

It is important for every married couple to understand that people usually do not change much when they get married. Couples, however, can choose to be happy in their marriages when they learn to accept what they have.[1]

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

Ecclesiastes 7:13

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life...

Ecclesiastes 9:9

God wants us to be joyful and happy. Happiness comes from accepting what we have and getting along with it. Conflicts come about when we struggle with certain things we cannot change.[2]

Remember the prayer of St. Francis Xavier:

"God grant me the courage to change the things I can change; the serenity to accept the things I cannot change and the wisdom to know the difference."

4 Things Every Married Couple Must Accept

1. Accept the Temperament of Your Spouse.[3]

• Your temperament + your experiences + Word of God = Your character

• Do not try to change your spouse's temperament. Rather pray that he/she will become more spiritually mature. (Refer to Chapter 42).

2. Accept the "Masculinity" or "Femininity" of Your Spouse.

• A man must accept that he is married to a woman not a man; so he must not try to suppress her natural feminine traits, like excessive talking.

• She is also the weaker vessel and must not be expected to behave and function like a man.[4]

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

1 Peter 3:7

• Women have things that appeal to them: dresses, weddings, chatting for a long time, cooking, details of issues and events, which a man may find "unnecessary".

• A woman must also accept that she is married to a man and not a woman. Men by their make-up are more robust, less chatty, and may not even notice the different colour schemes at a wedding. They are interested only in the major factors of an issue and not the details.

• Accept these natural differences and flow happily with them.

What husbands often object to in wives:

• That wives are sexually dull.

• That wives talk too much and about trivial things.

• That wives are petty and quarrelsome.

A man must accept that he is married to a woman, not to another man; so he should accept what women like.

What wives often object to in husbands:

• That they are too interested in sex.

• That they do not help their wives.

• That they do not talk enough to their wives.

A woman must accept that she is married to a man not to another woman; so she should accept what men like, such as sex and food.

3. Accept the Negative Things in Your Spouse's Character.

• Diagnose the negative aspects of your spouse's character and accept them.

4. Accept the Physical Structure or Looks of Your Spouse.

• We all change physically as the years go by. Do not make it your life's goal to make your spouse reduce or increase in size. Your flow with your spouse must not be dependent on whether or not he/she changes physically.

• Every spouse must make the effort to maintain good looks. There is beauty at every age. Enhance your physical looks. Do not neglect this just because you know that your Christian spouse will be faithful to you all the time.

Other Things You Must Accept

1. Accept Peace and Decide Not to Quarrel.

Make up your mind that peace is better than war and that it is better to live in peace than to prosecute every issue and stretch every matter.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Romans 12:18

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:17-18

2. Accept that it Is Your Christian Duty Not to Provoke Another to Anger and Bitterness.

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Hebrews 10:24

We are "to provoke one another to love and good works" not to bitterness and hatred. "Consider", which means " to think carefully about", and discover new ways to love people and to do good to them.

3. Accept that God Alone Can Change and Solve Complex Issues, so Commit Things to God, to Time, to the Elements, and to Nature. God Can Deal With Many Things.

God is better at taking care of us. He is more capable of handling complex issues for us. Many issues cannot be solved by explaining and prosecuting a matter. Many issues are better left to God by prayer and faith, knowing that He can "perfect all that concerneth you". Marital conflicts will be endless and probably just end in divorce unless you trust God to take care of various situations. In the process of time, some issues get resolved. At other times, God can use natural things (nature, the elements, etc.) to minister to your spouse and bring about a change.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 37:5

4. Accept that it Is the Wisdom of God to Choose the Path of Peace.

In marriage, there are always moments of unhappiness about one issue or other but we must accept that it is the wisdom of God to choose the path of peace rather than to quarrel.[5]

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he

that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

Proverbs 17:28

Accept to be a peacemaker and not a cantankerous and ill-natured person.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Matthew 5:9

"Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work", but a home full of love and peace will produce a healthy marriage and a good environment for children to grow in.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:14-18

5. Accept that the Word of God is Greater than Your Emotions or Personal Ideas.

A lasting, joyful Christian marriage can only be achieved if it is based on the Word of God. Allow the Word of God to rule in your life. Without the Word of God many issues will never die. Decide to obey the Word no matter how you feel or what you think. Do not be moved by what you feel but be moved, directed, motivated and constrained by the Word of Almighty God!!!

6. Develop a Flow in Spite of the Provocation. [6]

SECTION 8

THE HUMAN BODY

Chapter 26

Understanding the Human Body through Pictures

Understand the anatomy of your body by studying the following pictures.

Female

Every woman is encouraged to get to know her body better. She may use a mirror to observe the external genitalia and try to identify the vagina and the clitoris.[1]

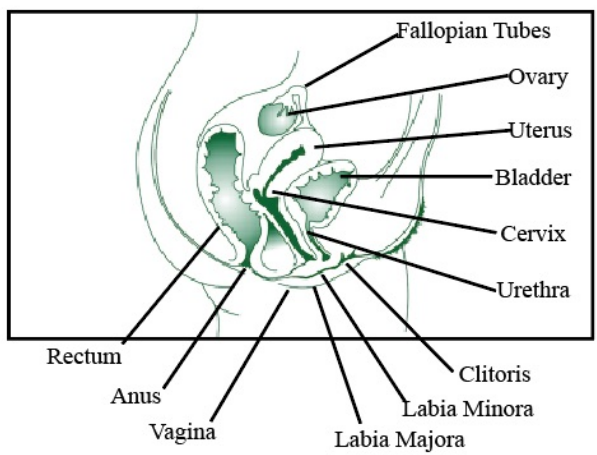

Fig. 8: Side view of the female reproductive organs [2]

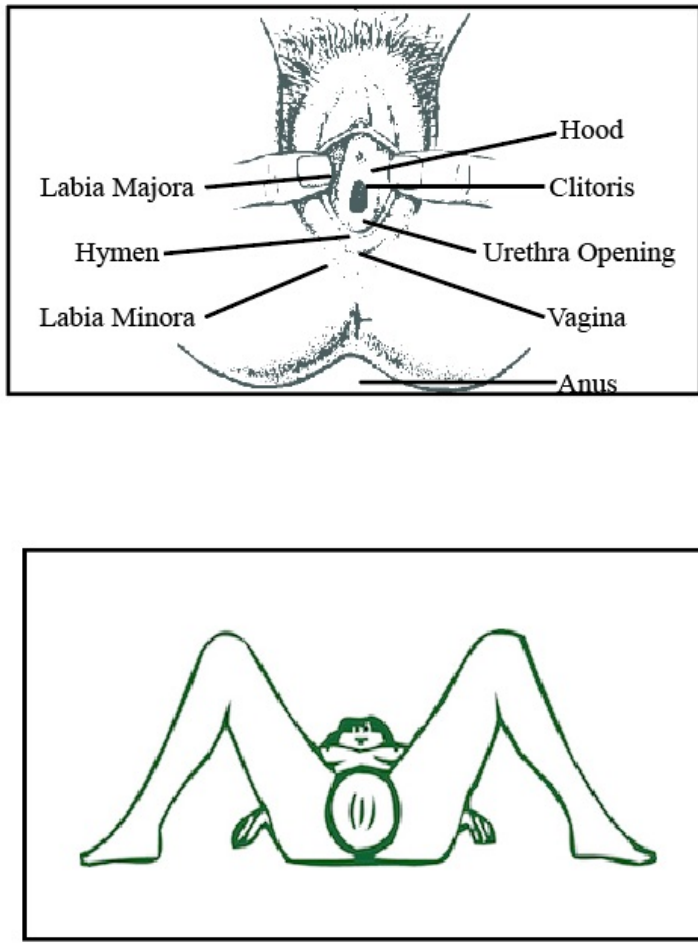

Fig 9: External genitalia of a woman in the lithotomy position [3]

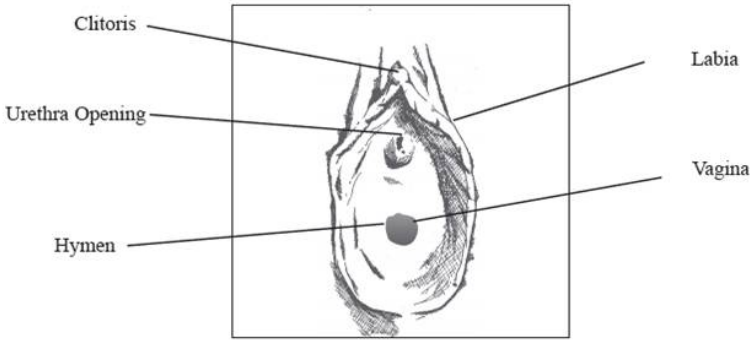

Fig. 10 (b): Vaginal Opening after Intercourse

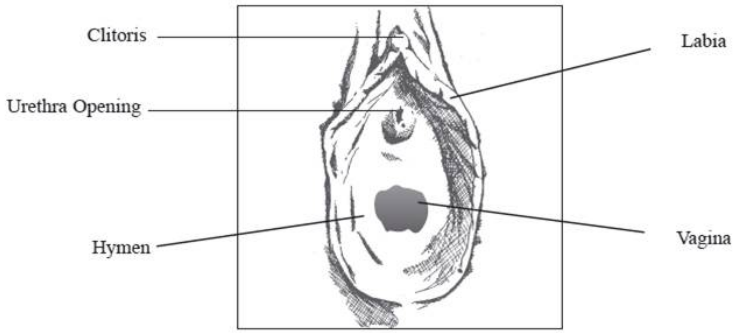

Fig. 10 (c): Vaginal Opening after Childbirth

Male

Every man should also get to know his body. He can stand in front of a mirror and examine his genitals.[4]

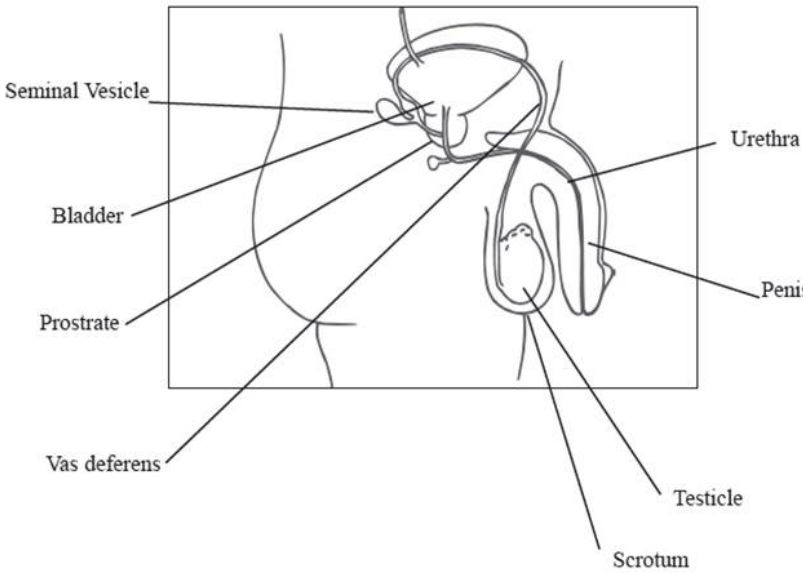

Fig. 11: Male reproductive organs[5]

Chapter 27

Family Planning Methods

Family planning involves the use of various methods to prevent unwanted pregancies and for child spacing. A couple may need to choose a suitable method of family planning just before they get married or later on in their family life.

Before we learn about the various family planning methods, let us learn a little more about the physiology of the female body.

Physiology of the Female Body

Menstruation

Menstruation is the process of discharging blood and other materials from the lining of the uterus in a mature, non-pregnant woman at the end of each menstrual cycle.

The purpose of the menstrual cycle is to prepare the uterus to receive a fertilized egg. Every month, one of the ovaries discharges an egg, which is carried along the fallopian tube to the uterus. It may remain in the fallopian tube for 24 - 48 hours and during this time, it may become fertilized.

In preparation for this monthly release of the egg, the tissue lining the womb—the endometrium, becomes thick and its blood supply increases. If the egg is not fertilized, the endometrium breaks down and blood loss occurs leading to menstruation (or the menses or period). Contractions of the muscles of the womb get rid of this tissue together with the unfertilized egg, if pregnancy does not occur. Sometimes the pain of these contractions is severe and it is known as dysmenorrhoea.

Menstrual bleeding usually lasts four to six days. Following this, the tissues are repaired. This is followed by the build up of the endometrium again. The whole menstrual cycle lasts about twenty-

eight days. If fertilization of the egg occurs, leading to pregnancy, the woman's periods stop until after the child is born. (Sometimes her periods may not begin again for a few months after the baby is born.)

Medical attention should be sought in the case where normal monthly menstrual bleeding has not occurred for some months but there is no pregnancy or the likelihood of it. This is amenorrhoea.

The menstrual cycle begins at puberty and continues monthly until the woman is about forty-five to fifty years old. At the age when menstruation ceases, the woman has the menopause.[1]

Fertilization

Fertilization is the process by which a sperm unites with an egg to produce a fertilized egg. The male organ, the penis, becomes erect at the time of sexual excitement because the blood supply is increased. It can then be inserted into the vagina of the female. At the point of heightened excitement, ejaculation takes place and sperms are released. The sperms swim into the uterus and up into the fallopian tubes where fertilization takes place.

Family Planning

Family planning enables a couple to prevent unwanted pregnancies and to space the intervals between their children. Other reasons for family planning include:

(1) A newly married couple needs some time to adjust to each other. It is desirable to have time to learn to communicate and to share before the responsibilities of a young family come upon them.

(2) Fear of pregnancy may inhibit the enjoyment of the sex relationship.

Methods

(1) Natural methods

(2) Barrier methods

(3) Spermicides

(4) Hormonal preparations

(5) Intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD)

(6) Permanent methods.[2]

1. The Natural Methods

(a) Coitus Interruptus

“Coitus interruptus” is the withdrawal of the penis from the vagina just prior to ejaculation. This method attempts to prevent pregnancy by depositing the semen outside the genital tract.

Advantages:

1. It involves no equipment or preparation before intercourse.

2. It is always available at no expense.

Disadvantages:

1. The fluid that seeps from the erect penis before ejaculation often contains sperm cells. These sperm cells may cause pregnancy even though the ejaculation is done outside the vagina.

2. It is often difficult to control accurately the time of ejaculation. The discipline required for withdrawal before ejaculation may take away some of the enjoyment of the experience.

3. The sudden withdrawal may prevent the wife from reaching orgasm in intercourse.

4. If 1,000 couples used coitus interruptus method, there would be only a 20 per cent decrease in the number of pregnancies. This means there would be 160 to 200 unplanned pregnancies in the course of a year.

(b) Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a method of contraception and it is only effective

when practised exclusively without food supplements. It is usually not effective due to existing working conditions.

(c) Scientific Methods

Used to determine the time when ovulation has occurred so that coitus can be avoided.

i. The Calendar Method

To use the rhythm (or calendar) methods successfully, a woman must know just how much variation there is in the length of her own menstrual cycles. This requires that she keep a written record of her menstrual periods for eight to twelve months before she can rely on the system. Basically, this detailed record is kept in order to better predict the beginning date of the next menstrual bleeding, called Day 1 of the menstrual cycle.

Once she has such a record, her physician can show her how to calculate the number of days each month during which intercourse must be avoided. Basically, she should subtract fourteen days from the next predicted date of onset of menstruation to find the day of ovulation. Then for the four days just before ovulation and for three days after it, she should avoid intercourse.

ii. Basal Body Temperature

Depends on identification of rise in basal body temperature which occurs at the time of ovulation. A rise of approximately 0.3 - 0.5 C. The knowledge of ovulation time determined by this method for several months, helps you to know precisely the ovulation period and consequently the period when it is safe to have intercourse without getting pregnant.

NB: Temperature recording may be affected by fever due to malaria or infections, for example.

iii. Cervical mucus

It is based on the female observation of a sequence of changes in the quality and quantity of cervical mucus during the menstrual cycle. Immediately after a menstrual period, the vaginal orifice feels

dry, but as ovulation time approaches, mucus can be detected. Initially, it is cloudy and sticky, but as the level of estrogen rises, more mucus is produced. It becomes clearer, strands stretch without breaking and it feels slippery. The peak of the clear mucus is reached on the day of ovulation, after which the mucus becomes cloudy again.[3]

2. The Barrier Methods

(a) The Condom

The condom (also called a prophylactic, pro, sheath, or rubber) fits over the erect penis to receive the semen and keep any sperm from entering the vagina during ejaculation. Around the world the condom is still the most widely used effective birth-control measure. Here are a few simple instructions for using the condom successfully:

1. The condom must be put on before intercourse. Contact between the penis and the vaginal area should be avoided until the condom is fitted over the erect penis, because the initial fluid which seeps from the penis may contain sperm cells.

2. Allow one-half inch of space at the end of the penis as a reservoir where the semen can collect in the condom. Otherwise, the semen will provide so much lubrication to the shaft of the penis that the condom might slip off.

3. Continue to unroll the condom all the way to the base of the penis.

4. Very soon after ejaculation, while the penis is still erect, carefully and slowly withdraw it from the vagina. You should hold the condom in place at the base of the penis. (If the erection is first allowed to subside, the condom may slip off.)

5. If the condom should slip off during intercourse, grasp the open end of it and pull it out of the vagina with care so as not to lose the contents. Then the wife should douche immediately and lather externally with soap and water.

6. Each time intercourse is repeated, a clean condom must be used.

Advantages:

1. It is easy to use.

2. There are no side effects.

3. It can be purchased at any drugstore without a prescription.

4. It puts the responsibility on the husband, which some wives consider a distinct advantage.

5. Immediately after intercourse there is visible proof of its effectiveness.

6. It effectively prevents the spread of most diseases which are transmitted through intercourse.

Disadvantages:

1. It reduces sensation to the penis. However, this may be an advantage for some husbands who find that it helps to delay their ejaculation.

2. The condom can be put on only after the husband has an erection.

3. It interrupts sexual foreplay. This objection can be easily overcome by the wife lovingly placing the condom on her husband's penis as an additional erotic part of lovemaking.

4. The wife may experience some discomfort without lubrication. This can be solved by using lubricated condoms (hermetically sealed) or by using a contraceptive jelly which serves two purposes—lubrication and added safety. Never use Vaseline or cold cream, as petroleum-base products may damage the rubber in the condom.

5. There may be a small undetectable pinhole in the condom. It has been estimated that even a pinhole would contribute less than one in 200,000 chances for a pregnancy.

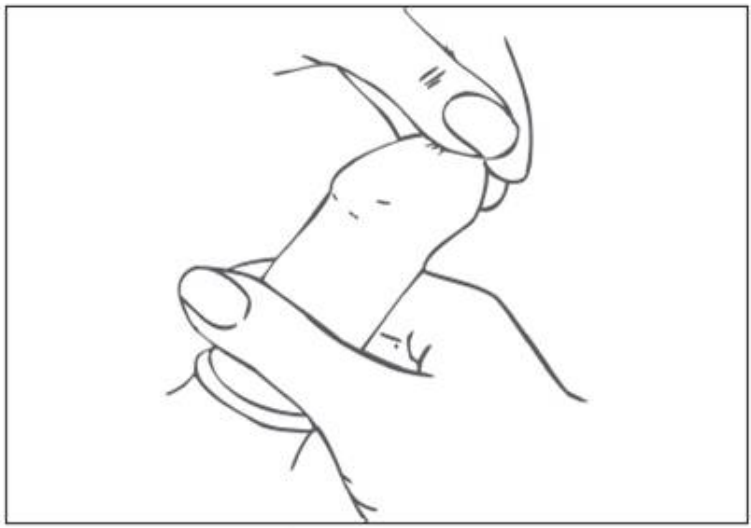

Fig. 12: Condom fitted on an erect penis

(b) The Diaphragm

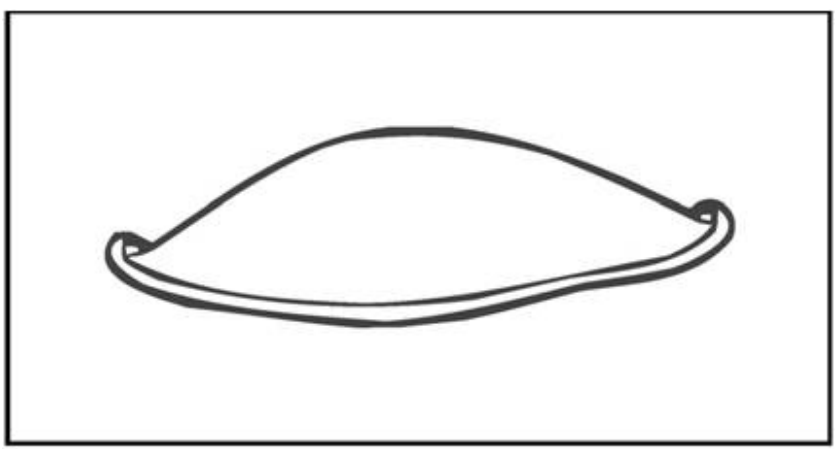

Fig. 13: The diaphragm

Diaphragms are made in various sizes, and the woman's vagina must be examined so that she is given the size most suitable for her vagina. Most women using the diaphragm smear spermicidal jelly in the dome and around the rim of the diaphragm, although the use of

a spermicidal jelly may not be necessary. Usually a woman squats, or stands with one foot on a chair, to introduce the cap, and inserts it into her vagina in an upward and backward direction. Inside the vagina, it regains its shape and fits snugly across the vagina covering the cervix.

After childbirth, the capacity of the vagina may increase to some extent and the woman should be refitted if she intends to continue to use the diaphragm as a contraceptive method.

Disadvantages:

1. Lack of privacy for insertion and removal. The user needs initial tuition.

2. Lack of water sometimes for cleaning the diaphragm.

3. Need for additional spermicide cream or jelly to improve effectiveness.

4. Not readily available.

5. Not very comfortable to wear. The cap must remain in place 6 - 8 hours after intercourse.

6. It is a little expensive, and sometimes there is difficulty in finding a suitable size.

3. Spermicides

These spermicidal products are used by themselves and are effective because they will kill sperms without harming delicate vaginal tissue. Available in three forms—foam, cream, and synthetic gel—these products are applied with a slim plastic vaginal applicator which automatically measures the proper dose. They are so effective that only one application is required before each sexual act. If a woman wishes to douche at all, she should wait at least six hours. Spermicides are significantly more effective than the rhythm, withdrawal, or douching methods.[4]

Advantages:

1. Vaginal spermicides can be bought without a prescription. 2 No fitting is necessary, such as that done before obtaining a diaphragm.

2. There is nothing to remove after intercourse.

3. Women who use this method need concern themselves with it only at those times when intercourse takes place.

Disadvantages:

1. To be effective, vaginal spermicides must be placed in the vagina just before intercourse.

2. The applicator must be washed with soap and water after each use.

3. Occasionally a spermicide may cause an allergic irritation in the vagina.

4. A greater volume of vaginal discharge occurs following intercourse, as both semen and spermicide are discharged. Some women find this a bother.

5. If 1,000 women used the vaginal spermicide method for one year, approximately 76 of these would have unplanned pregnancies. This includes those women who failed to use the spermicide before each intercourse.

4. Hormonal Preparations

(a) Oral Contraceptives (“The Pill”)

The oral contraceptive method requires a woman to take a contraceptive pill or tablet every day for 21 days. Every woman beginning to use this method, takes the first pill 5 days after the start of her menstrual period. She then takes one pill every day until she has taken 21 pills. Then she stops taking the pills, and within 2 to 3 days, her period should begin. 7 days after taking the last tablet, she begins taking the pill again for the next 21 days and repeats the cycle. This routine continues month after month for as long as the woman wishes to prevent pregnancy.

The pills are basically composed of two hormones closely resembling natural hormones. When these substances are taken, they signal the body not to produce an egg. Since no egg is produced while the pill is being taken, no egg will be present in the woman's body to unite with the male sperm during intercourse. When she stops taking the pill, ovulation begins again. [5]

Advantages

1. The combined oral contraceptive, the Pill, is the safest contraceptive with nearly 100% protection provided it is taken daily as recommended. It has a pregnancy rate of 0.3% per hundred women.

2. It does not require preparation before intercourse.

Disadvantages:

1. The pill has to be used simultaneously with another contraceptive method for at least one month.

2. Nausea is common in the first cycle and can be reduced by taking the pills last thing at night.

3. Tenderness and slight enlargement of the breasts may occur, but usually cease after a few cycles.

4. The "menstrual" loss is usually reduced. Inter-menstrual spotting (breakthrough bleeding) may occur.

5. An initial weight-gain of 0.5 kg is common. This is usually lost after a few cycles; changing to another pill sometimes decreases the weight gain.

6. Hypertension may occur especially during the first year of use and in patients over 30.

7. Cholestatic jaundice—yellow eyes and dark urine.

8. The risk of venous thrombosis, embolism, coronary thrombosis and cerebral haemorrhage is increased in women taking the combined pill.

9. The first period after stopping oral contraception is often late.

10. If a woman has had an oestrogen dependent tumour (e.g., breast cancer) pills containing oestrogens are contraindicated.

11. Vaginal candidiasis—whitish, chalky discharge; not foul smelling.

12. Chloasma—facial pigmentation like that sometimes seen in pregnancy, ie. darkening of the face.

13. Migraine headaches may occur.

14. Psychological effects are difficult to assess. Depression is sometimes attributed to the pill, but seldom with much evidence. Fear of the pill is common because of unbalanced newspaper reports of its risks.

Despite this long list of possible side effects it should be realized that millions of women throughout the world are using the pill without any trouble.

(b) Injectables

This is similar to the pill. The woman is given an injection once in two or three months.

5. The Intrauterine Contraceptive Device (IUCD)

The IUCD, also called the loop, is a soft flexible plastic loop which may be inserted by a physician. Attached to the IUCD is a firm nylon thread which protrudes from the cervix into the vagina about one inch. The woman can touch this thread to be certain that the IUCD is in the proper place. Later this thread is used to remove the IUCD.

There is some uncertainty as to how the IUCD works. It is generally recognized to be dependent upon the foreign body reaction which is produced by its presence in the uterus.[6]

NB: This form of contraceptive is not recommended by the church as we believe it causes the abortion of a two or three-day-old

pregnancy.

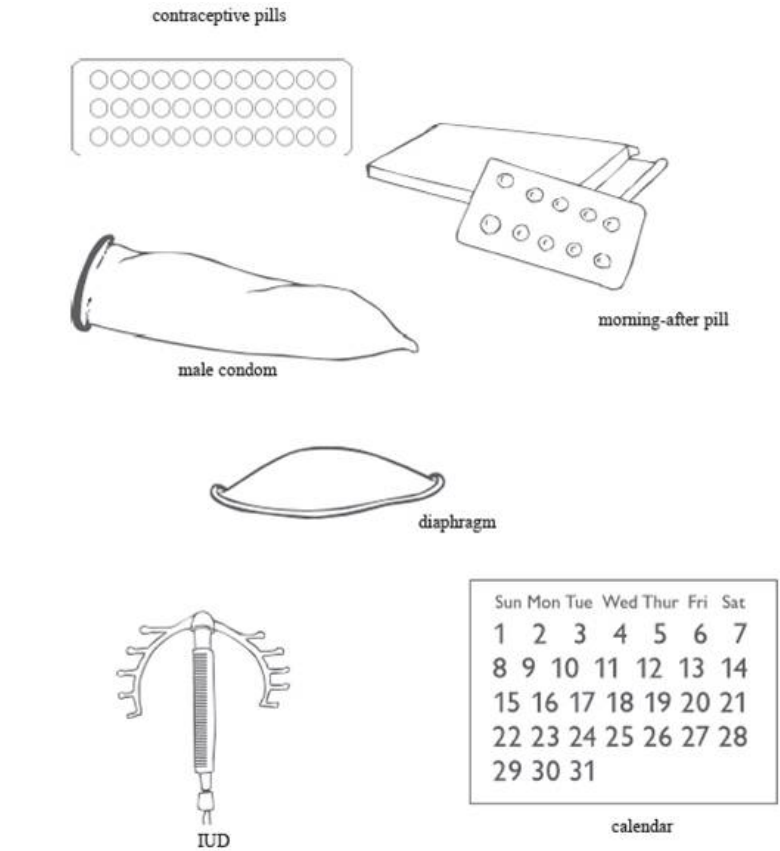

Fig. 14: Methods of Contraception

6. Permanent Family Planning

This is a permanent method of contraception. The permanent contraceptive method for men is vasectomy and tubal ligation for women. (See pictures below).

Things to consider before having a permanent method of contraception:

1. If a child dies the couple may want to have another child.

2. If the wife dies and the husband wants to remarry, no woman may want to marry a man who has had a vasectomy. Vasectomy is not the same as impotence!

3. If the husband dies, and the wife has had a tubal ligation, she may want to have more children in her next marriage. However, this is less of a problem than the above point.

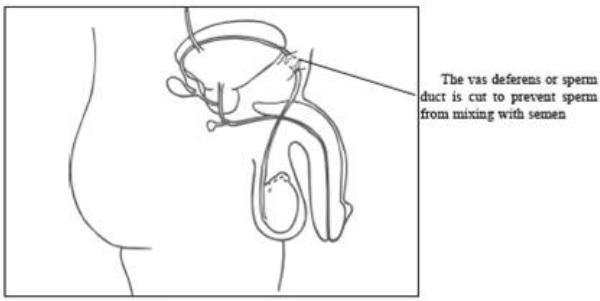

Fig. 15: Vasectomy

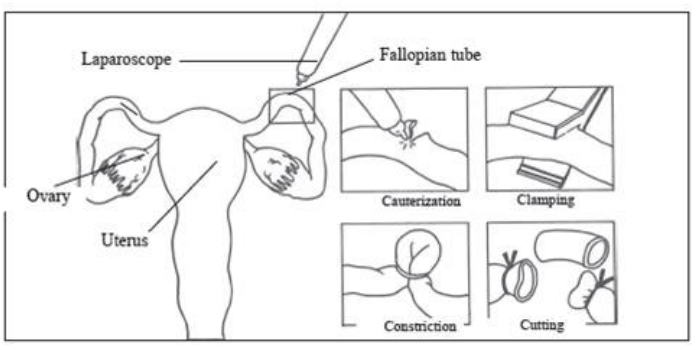

Fig. 16: Tubal ligation

SECTION 9

THE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

Chapter 28

Introduction to Sexual Happiness

During these counselling sessions, we will attempt to show you that sex is beautiful, sex is holy and that God talks about sex.[1]

It is described in the Bible. The Bible has a lot to say about sex. Sex was created by God and not by the devil. Sex has been so misused and perverted by the devil and the world that, the impression has been created that sex is ugly and sinful. We are learning from this study that on the contrary, sex is God's wonderful creation. When practised within the confines of God's will, sex can only lead to more joy and peace in the marriage.[2]

Sexual intercourse can be very pleasurable and enjoyable to both men and women. However, it is an art that must be learnt and developed. Sex is not about scoring 10 out of 10 for your performance, it is about having fun with your partner and showing care. So couples should relax and be prepared to learn about a new world.

To achieve this, you should first have a loving and comfortable relationship. In an atmosphere of love and trust, you are free to shed all inhibitions and open up completely to your partner emotionally.

Sex enhances the love between the husband and the wife. It brings couples close together. Most hard feelings melt during and after sex.

Why commit fornication when you can commit love?

Regular sex is a privilege for the born-again Christian couple. It is God's gift to you, from the day you marry till your old age. Make use of this gift.

8 Reasons for Sex

1. Pleasure (see Chapter 31).

2. Duty (see Chapter 32).

3. Reproduction (see Chapter 36).

4. A way of staying close together as a couple.

The sexual life of a couple is a thermometer of their relationship and love (see the “sexometer” below).

(a) When the relationship is healthy and strong, they will have sex frequently e.g. honeymoon and early period of marriage.

(b) A sign that a couple are no longer close is that they have not had sex for some time. For example, if a couple has not had sex for 1 month, it is a sure sign that they are not flowing together. If they have not had sex for 3 months, it is a sign of serious marital problems.

(c) Quality, excitable sex can prevent promiscuity/adultery.

(d) The biggest sex organ, is the mind.[3]

FREQUENCY	RELATIONSHIP
Twice a day	Typical of a very, very happy relationship -- Relaxation/honeymoon escasty
Daily	Typical of a very happy marriage
Every other day	Typical of harmonious marrige, especially in working couples
Once a week	Typical of marriage experiencing pressures of life
Twice a month	Typical of diharmonious marriage, especially life in-between quarrels/storms
Once a month	Typical of a marriage in co-existence -- uninterested in each other
Once two-three months	Typical of a marriage in serious disharmony -- query unfaithfulness/adultery
Once every six months	Typical of a couple in virtual separation and marital breakdown
Once a year	Typical of total breakdown of marriage and virtual divorce

Fig. 17: The Sexometer

Sexometer

5. Regular sex prevents adultery:

(a) When you have sex, as with all other physical needs, your desire for sex goes down, since you are well satisfied. For example, if you eat well at home, you will not have the desire to buy food outside your home since you are well-satisfied at home. The same applies to sex.

(b) Wives must realize that it is in their own interest to have sex regularly with their husbands so that they will not be interested in other girls they meet outside the home everyday.

6. A way of expressing your love to your wife or husband:

(a) There are different ways of expressing love, such as buying a gift, cooking a nice meal etc. Another way of expressing love is having sex with your wife or husband.

(b) Romantic behaviour such as kissing, petting, fondling is not meant for sinful boyfriend and girlfriend relationships but for

properly married couples. Couples are encouraged to behave romantically.

7. Sex can be a happy ending to some quarrels:

(a) There is a saying that there is no problem that cannot be solved in the bed.

(b) After problems have been sorted out by discussions and rendition of apolo¬gies, sex can be a very happy ending.

(c) Sex is not a substitute for discussing the issue.

(d) A wife who wants to calm her husband down can have sex with him.

8. Sex can be a way of releasing tension.

Sexual activity releases endorphins or causes relaxation that can be useful for a pastor preparing to preach, or for a footballer who is tensed up for a match; or for a student going to write an exam, or for someone attending an interview.

Chapter 29

The Wedding Night

We recommend that newly married couples spend their first night together at a place where they can have maximum privacy, for example, a hotel.

Why the Wedding Night Is Important

1. You do not have another chance to relive your first experiences. You would be glad you consummated your marriage in a special way. We mark the beginning of many things in a grand way: outdoorings for babies, inaugurations for new governments, new buildings, new projects, etc.

2. You need to have a memorable first time experience to serve as a reference point. Many challenges lie ahead in the marriage and it is good to have a memorable, never-to-be-forgotten landmark you can look back to with joy—you will be encouraged.

3. It is important to spend money on yourselves to enjoy the fruit of your labour. After all, you spent so much to make others enjoy themselves at the wedding reception, lunch or dinner. It is only fair that:

The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

2 Timothy 2:6

You must also understand that it is a mark of real blessing when you are able to enjoy what the Lord has given you. Many people labour to let others enjoy themselves, while they just go on labouring.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh

under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

Ecclesiastes 5:18-19

Rise up and take your portion, for the Lord has blessed you!!!

What to Do on the Wedding Night

1. The couple should have some lubricant at hand.

2. The bridegroom should not be in a rush to undress his bride. Your bride may be uncomfortable if you suddenly and hurriedly expose her body and see her naked.

3. The bridegroom should relax his bride by doing other social things, like having dinner, chatting, saying nice things to her and going for a walk, etc.

4. Upon arrival from the walk or dinner, the couple should start embracing, kissing and fondling. The husband may start undressing the bride [or they may undress each other]. He should be gentle and not rush to suddenly expose her nakedness. A woman is very conscious of her body, her figure, her breasts, her tummy, her size, etc. As you unveil your bride, slowly and gently, say only positive things and avoid negative remarks like: “I didn’t know you were so fat!” or, “Your breasts are very small.”[1]

5. The light should be turned off to reduce shyness and tension.

6. The bridegroom must decide that he will not necessarily be able to penetrate or break through on the first night, especially if the bride is a virgin. This will make him less aggressive and less determined to cause damage.

7. The bride should lie down on her back (if necessary, with her buttocks on a pillow, and open her legs as wide as she can. She should have her legs bent at the knee, and the soles of her feet resting on the bed. A good pillow under the buttocks is very helpful as it elevates the hips and makes it easier to enter the vagina. It is

advisable that the newly married couple should make love in what is known as the “missionary position”. It is a simple and gentle way to make love.

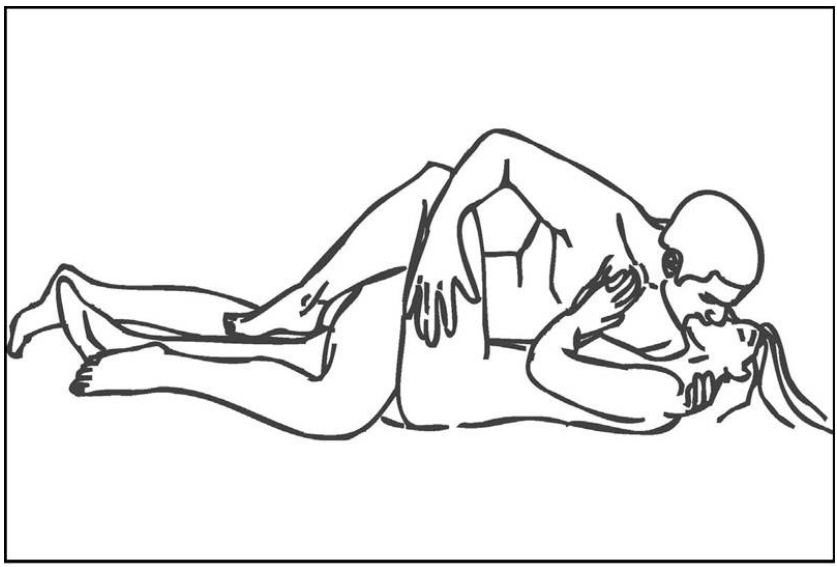

Fig. 18: The Basic Sex Posiiton

There is a great deal of body contact and good depth of penetration when couples make love in this position. Another advantage is that it is possible for couple to kiss each other.

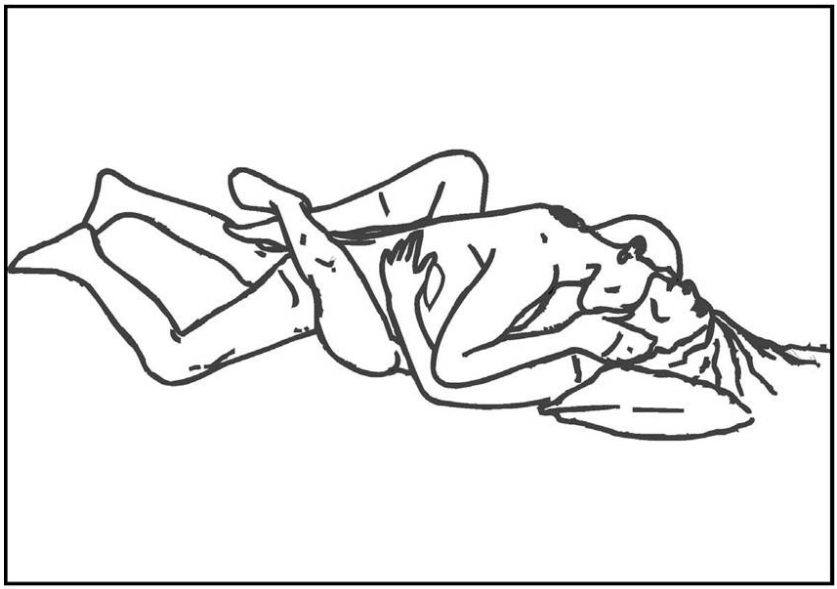

Fig. 19: The Enhanced Basic Position

This position is similar to the missionary position. The woman lies on her back and raises her legs from off the bed. Her partner lies between her legs and she crosses her legs over his back. The advantage with this position is that there is more clitoral stimulation because the woman has her legs raised.

8. The man should apply a generous amount of lubricant to his erect penis, while she does the same to her vagina, or he may do both.

9. The man should try to slowly penetrate, and she should use her hand to guide his penis into the vagina.[2]

10. He should try to push gently to enter the vagina.

11. The bridegroom should relax if there is too much difficulty and tension.

12. If it is not possible to penetrate, the bridegroom should encourage and comfort his bride. Out of love for his bride, he could decide to wait and try again later. A lot of encouragement,

comforting, and loving words will do a world of good.

13. If penetration is possible, though painful, the woman should console herself that the pain gets less and less with subsequent sexual intercourse.

14. When penetration is possible, there may be a little bleeding in virgins as the hymen (a thin piece of skin that covers the vaginal entrance) is broken.

Chapter 30

The Honeymoon

The honeymoon is a vacation or trip taken by the newly married couple—a period of blissful harmony, supreme happiness, utter joy and relaxation.[1] The couple must plan for some days off work and other activities, to go for their honeymoon.

A period of two weeks to one month should be fine. We recommend that the couple travel away from where they normally live.[2]

Why the Honeymoon Is Important

1. It is biblical to go for a honeymoon.

In the Bible days, the newly married man was not supposed to go to battle for one whole year. The reason? To "cheer up his wife which he hath taken"!

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

Deuteronomy 24:5

The biblically stipulated period for a honeymoon is one whole year! So if we can only afford two weeks to a month then we should go for it.

2. The honeymoon allows the couple maximum privacy.

They begin to discover each other and to explore this whole new area of marriage as they relate more intimately and share their lives together in one place, in one room and on one bed.

3. The entirely new experience, the sex act, is described as a humbling experience.

If a man find a damsel that is a virgin … and lie with her … the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her…

Deuteronomy 22:28-29

You need a private, secluded atmosphere, free from any form of interference and intimidation to take your initial humble steps to try out what you've been taught.[3]

What to Do During the Honeymoon

1. Take memorable pictures of yourselves during the honeymoon (not naked, please)!

2. Say nice things to each other: "I love you", "I'm glad I married you", "You look beautiful", etc. should be common in your conversations.

3. Embrace each other often and take naps or watch TV while one rests his/her head on the other's lap or bossom.

4. Talk with each other on any matters of interest to enhance fellowship and friendship. Talk about the wedding event, people you were surprised to see, plans for new home, etc.

5. Feel free to kiss and give each other pecks on the cheeks, lips and back of hand as you walk around. Kissing and touching must not only be a prelude to sex.

6. Have sex as many times as you have energy to perform in a day. A good stock of tiger-nuts and malta guiness, or other energy boosters (like the Red Bull drink) they say, may do some good.

7. Feel free to have sex at any time of the day.

8. Explore having sex at different locations during the honeymoon. For example, in the bathroom, hall, bedroom, kitchen or in the car, (but not in the full view of others).

9. Try different positions taught during the marriage counselling.

10. Try having sex with your clothes on after returning from a walk.

11. Take turns to bath each other, playing with your bodies in the process.

12. Sometimes sleep naked in each other's arms.

13. You may walk around naked, like Adam and Eve in the house or room if you are sure there will be no intruders.

14. Go for walks under moonlight or on a quiet road while holding each other hand¬in-hand, around the waist, or around the shoulders. The husband may occasionally lift the wife if he has the strength to do so.

15. Swim or play games of interest, stealing glances at each other and touching each other, from time to time.

16. Watch an interesting film together (something with a romantic theme may be nice).

17. Go for sightseeing to amusing and interesting spots.

18. At lunch or dinner sit opposite each other and play with your bare feet under the table (watch out for onlookers).

19. Dress in a suggestive way by wearing see through dresses, short skirts and short blouses.

20. Of course, you must have your quiet times, praying and reading your Bibles individually. Share your quiet times with each other and pray together from time to time.

Chapter 31

Pleasurable Sex

Sex was created by God as something beautiful and pleasurable to be enjoyed by both the husband and wife, and not just for procreation[1]. Husbands and wives must therefore decide to make sex pleasurable. Pleasurable sex can be defined as sex in which both partners set out to give and derive maximum excitement. Pleasurable sex is not a performance to display sexual prowess. It involves having real fun with your spouse.[2]

16 Steps to Pleasurable Sex

(1) Be nice to each other during the day. Small thoughtful acts e.g. an intimate phone call, a bunch of flowers, are important.

(2) Look nice, smell nice and be clean. You may choose to wear clothes or nightwear that your partner finds exciting.

(3) Choose a nice place to have sex e.g. living room, bathroom, bedroom, or bedroom floor.

(4) Set the lights to what suits you—darkness, dim lights or bright lights.[3]

(5) Foreplay begins with spontaneous endearing conversation with loving pats, hugs and kisses.[4]

(6) Gradually the couple undress each other.

(7) The husband must continue stimulating his wife by kissing and caressing her lips, thighs, buttocks, clitoris, labia minora and other parts of her body until she is sexually excited. This is signalled by an increase in lubrication of the vagina.[5]

(8) The wife should also continue stimulating her husband by rubbing and caressing the penis (especially the tip) and kissing and caressing his “known” sensitive areas.

(9) Let your partner know which movements stimulate you or distract you.[6]

NB: Excitement is slower to reach its peak in a woman and lasts longer than in a man. The sexual arousal of a woman can be compared to the heating of an electric iron (it takes time to build up) whereas that of the man can be compared to the switching on of an electric bulb (can be immediately turned on).[7]

(10) At the point where the husband judges that his wife is at the height of her excitement, penetration can occur. One of the pleasurable parts of sexual intercourse is the feeling of the man's penis entering the vagina.

(11) Use artificial lubricants eg. KY jelly, vaseline and creams, to increase lubrication to make penetration easier.

(12) Continue to stimulate each other during the act by holding tightly, caressing and kissing.

(13) Talk to each other and express your feelings during the act.[8]

(14) Inform your partner when you feel you are reaching orgasm and whether it would be alright to ejaculate or hold back for a while.

(15) You could repeat the whole process as many times as there is strength to do so. Multiple orgasms and ejaculations are possible. You may have to rest for a while and start again after arousing each other for sometime.

(16) Let your partner feel that he/she has done something wonderful to you.

Chapter 32

Dutiful Sex

It is common for a wife to be uninterested or unwilling to have sex because she is emotionally dissatisfied, tired or sick. This natural fallout of events has led to the break-up of many marriages. Let us remember that some of the older generation folks were polygamists. This probably came about because some wives were not willing to have regular sex with their husbands or complained frequently of sickenesses and so the husbands just found other women. We as born-again Christians cannot do that! We only have each other. So let us not defraud, cheat, or torture each other by unexpectedly denying or depriving each other.

Remember that each time we abstain from sex it must be by MUTUAL (both of you agreeing) CONSENT.

(a) The man usually has a stronger sexual desire and wants to have sex more often. This may sometimes be surprising to the woman.

(b) But it is your lawful and spiritual DUTY to give yourself to each other daily or as often as required.[1]

(c) The Bible calls it FRAUD (a criminal offence) to deny your partner of his/her lawful rights to your body.

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Corinthians 7:5

The Woman

1. Things not to do

Do not complain, or murmur or pass sarcastic, sharp and cutting remarks like: “Don’t you get satisfied when you eat?”

Do all things without murmurings and disputings.

Philippians 2:14

Remember: You are giving your body to your husband—your breasts, your vagina etc., which is your spiritual duty as a wife.

The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband…

1 Corinthians 7:4

2. Things to do

It is important to establish here that without an erection, a man cannot have sex. A wife who wants to have sex has to be creative, to arouse her husband who is not in the mood for it. The wife should help him have an erection by doing the following:

(a) Willingly and pleasantly take off your dress and lie down.

(b) Smile and be happy because you're accomplishing your God-given duty.[2]

(c) Play an active role—get involved by kissing, fondling, moving, and raising of legs.

(d) AVOID "CADAVERIC" SEX. (A cadaver is a dead body. Sexual intercourse in which one partner is as stiff and still as a dead body is "cadaveric" sex!)

(e) Lubricants may be used.

(f) Spontaneous lovemaking is easier if you wear the right clothes. Wear exciting nighties.

(g) Various forms of undressing can powerfully turn on your husband.

i. Just underwear.

ii. Just a skirt, no blouse or bra.

iii. No underwear.

iv. Total nakedness.

v. Showing the vulva (private part). Practise the lithotomy position (see Fig. 9 pg. 114)

(h) Undress him gradually, then physically stimulate his penis (especially the tip) with your fingers by rubbing or stroking up and down. A little KY gel used around the tip of the penis will help to avoid friction. Patiently stay with the things you know turn him on; you will get an arousal from him! Learn to sleep without panties. You will be easily available.

(i) You don't need to wash every time after sex.

All the above make the sex art a less laborious event.

The Man

1. Things not to do

Do not make scathing remarks about your wife's body, for instance comments like: "Your stomach is too big."

But speaking the truth in love…

Ephesians 4:15

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Ephesians 5:28

2. Things to do

(a) Be nice to your wife during the day, and speak lovingly to her. For example, a phone call makes her feel that you are thinking about her.[3]

(b) Take a bath often, especially at the end of a hard day's work.

(c) Do not be in a hurry to have sex. Take time to stimulate your wife by kissing and caressing her.[4]

It is recommended that couples have sex at least everyday or every other day.

Chapter 33

Exciting Sex

Exciting pleasurable sex can be achieved by trying sex in adventurous and exciting positions and places.[1] Pleasurable sex isn't about scoring 10 out of 10 for your performance. It involves having real fun with your spouse.

For more exciting and pleasurable sex, do the following:

1. Be adventurous.

2. Create variety.

3. Do not hold yourself back with the feeling that your partner may use your exploits against you or laugh at you.

4. Abandon yourselves totally into each other's arms.

5. Allow the woman to play a more active role during sexual intercourse, especially in a sitting or squatting role, for example, the jockey positions.

The Jockey Positions

In this position, the woman sits on the man who is lying down. The traditional roles are reversed for a change and the woman is able to move about as she wishes and with more freedom. The woman is therefore better able to play an even more active role in sex. Dim lights would allow for more liberty.

There are basically 3 types of Jockey Positions:

i. Jockey position – leaning backward

ii. Jockey position – straight

iii. Jockey position – leaning forward

In this position, if the woman lowers her body backward towards her husband's feet, he sees directly into his wife's vulva. This is very exciting for the husband.

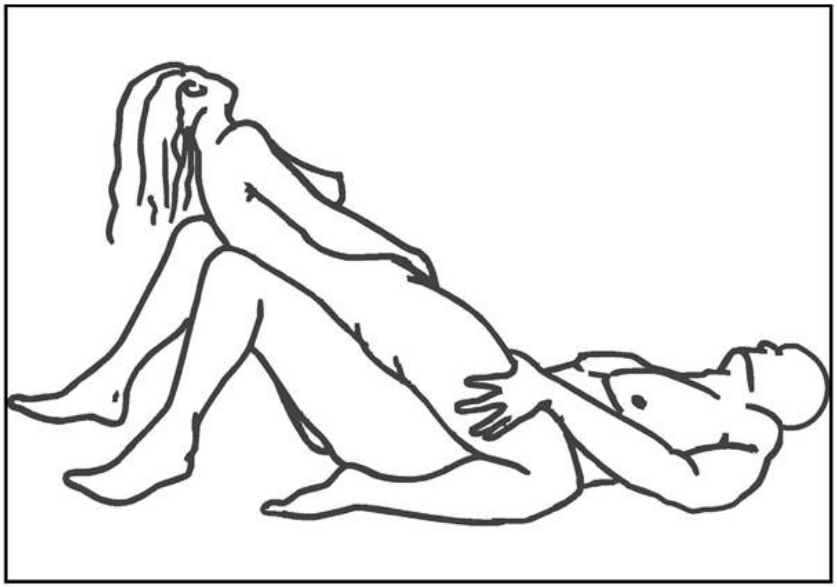

Fig. 20: Jockey Position – leaning backward

Fig. 21: Jockey Position – straight

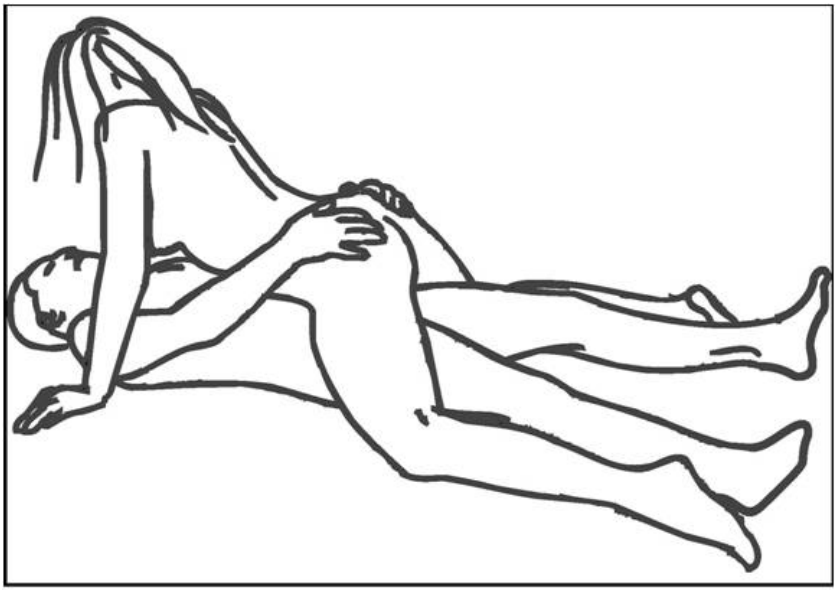

Fig. 22: Jockey Position – leaning forward

Advantages:

i. The woman is able to play a more active role.[2]

ii. It is exciting for the man to see the woman get turned on.

iii. The man can stimulate the clitoris with his fingers especially in the Jockey position—leaning backwards.

iv. The man can stimulate the nipples better.

v. The man can admire his wife's breasts during sex.

vi. It is possible to kiss each other.

6. Different sex positions allow for development of other sensations and feelings in the sex act.

7. Some of these positions are more practical in pregnancy or with a very heavy man, so it is good to learn them before pregnancy[3]. In addition to the Jockey Positions, the Crossed and Backpass Positions are also practical for pregnant women.

The Crossed Position

The woman lies on her back on the bed and the man lies diagonally across her. She opens her legs wide enough to make entry possible and he rocks gently from side to side.

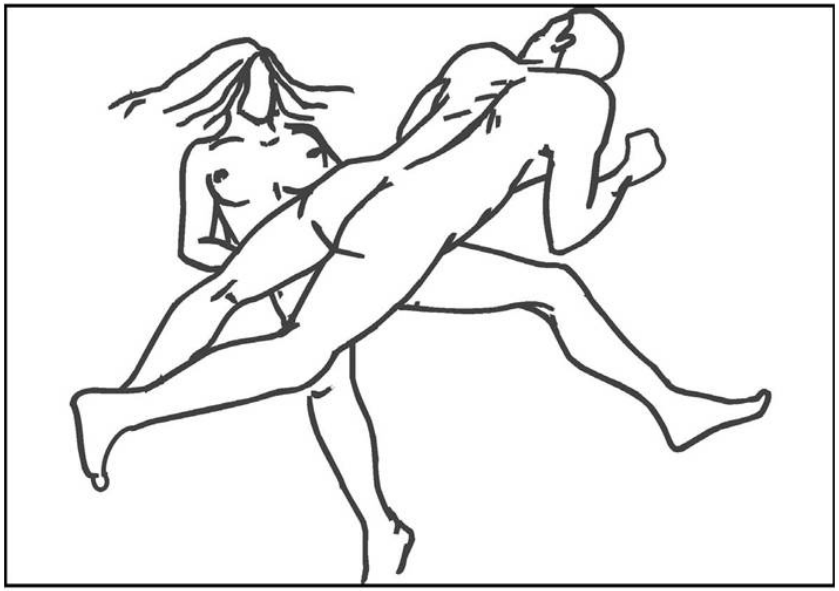

Fig. 23: The Crossed Position

Advantages

1. The Crossed Position offers a better clitoral stimulation.[4]

2. The pelvis is tilted and lifted and therefore penetration is deeper.

Disadvantages

It is not possible to kiss each other in this position.

The Backpass Position

This is a position suitable for relaxed and unhurried lovemaking. The woman lies on the side of her stomach and the man enters her vagina from the back.[5]

Advantages

i. The woman's buttocks are accessible to fondle and lie on.

ii The man can experience and enjoy the cushioning effect of his

wife's buttocks.

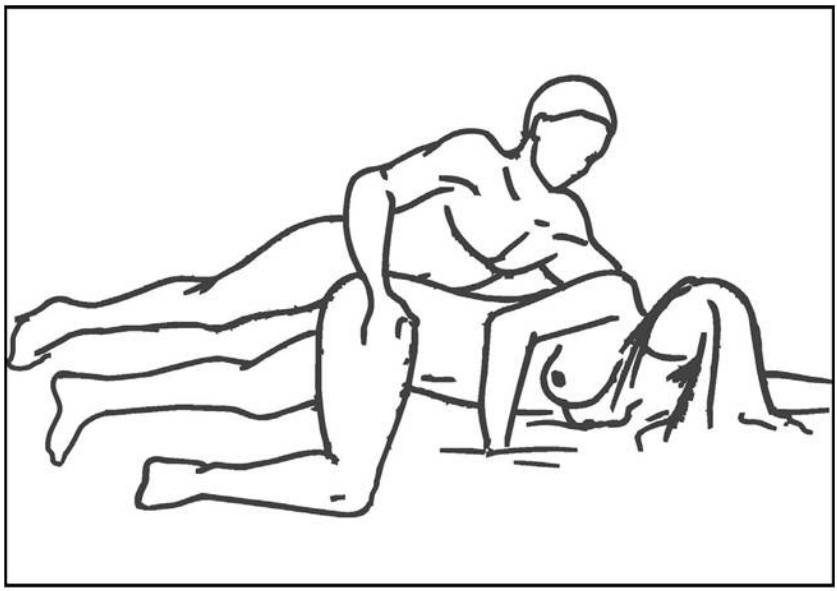

Fig. 24: The Backpass Position

Different positions have different levels of comfort, convenience and pleasure and couples should feel free to do whatever they both enjoy. This makes them give full expression to their mutual love in the sexual experience.

Never at any time should one force the other to do anything that he or she does not want to do. Love does not force.[6]

No party should limit or hinder love play and place restrictions on the different positions, styles and actions. The unadventurous and unexciting partner will eventually drive away the other.

Chapter 34

Orgasm

Orgasm can be defined as the peak or the climax of sexual excitement.[1] Married couples should make it an objective to bring their partners to this peak during the sex act. The following steps will help build up excitement:

(a) Look nice, smell nice and be clean. You may choose to wear clothes (nightwear, bra and panties, etc.) or not, depending on what your partner finds exciting.

(b) Choose a nice place to have sex, e.g., living room, bathroom, bedroom, bedroom floor, etc.

(c) Adjust the lights to what suits you—darkness, dim lights or bright lights.

(d) Foreplay should begin with spontaneous endearing conversation accompanied by loving pats, hugs and kisses.

(e) Gradually the couple should undress each other.

(f) The husband must continue stimulating his wife by kissing and caressing her lips, thighs, buttocks, clitoris, labia and other parts of her body until she is sexually excited. This is signalled by an increase in lubrication of the vagina.

(g) The wife should also continue stimulating her husband by rubbing and caressing the penis (especially the tip) and kissing and caressing his “known” sensitive areas.

(h) Let your partner know which movements stimulate you or distract you.

NOTE: *Excitement is slower to reach its peak in a woman and lasts longer than in a man. The woman’s build-up of excitement can be compared to the heating of an electric iron, whereas that of the man can*

be compared to the switching on of an electric bulb.

(i) At the point where the husband judges that his wife is at the height of her excitement, penetration can occur. One of the pleasurable parts of sexual intercourse is the feeling of the man's penis entering the vagina.

(k) Continue to stimulate each other during the act by holding tightly, caressing and kissing.

(l) Talk to each other and express your feelings during the act.

(m) Let your partner feel that he/she has done something wonderful to you.

Sexual Excitement in Men

Pre-orgasmic Phase

(a) Sexual excitement in a man can be achieved by sight and touch.

(b) The initial sign of sexual excitement is the erection of the penis.

(c) With further excitement, a clear secretion emerges from the tip of the penis.

(d) Once the penis is erect and the arousal stimulus continues, the man seeks to have sexual intercourse.

(e) During the sex act itself, he thrusts in and out of his wife's vagina, the excitement increases progressively and orgasm approaches.

Orgasmic Phase

(a) There is a quickening of the heartbeat.

(b) There is a jerking and vibration of the penis as the man ejaculates and a stiffening of the body.

(c) There is an audible sigh and the penis begins to become flaccid (limp) after orgasm.

(d) When orgasm occurs, the man holds/clasps his wife tightly to his body.

(e) It takes a little while for the penis to become erect again. This time varies from about five minutes to a few hours, depending on the youthfulness and excitement levels of the man.[2]

Things that Increase Sexual Excitement in a Man

(a) Seeing that the woman is enjoying sex and that he is giving her pleasure.

(b) Anything, e.g. position, attire, place, etc., that is out of the ordinary or unusual.

(c) Tightening the wall of the vagina while the penis is in it by an action similar to attempting to stop the flow of urine. (Pelvic floor exercises).

Laxity of the vagina walls and over-lubrication of the vagina may reduce excitement.

Sexual Excitement in Women

The Pre-orgasmic Phase

(a) Sexual excitement in a woman builds up slowly. She is turned on as her husband kisses and carresses her, and gradually moves on to stimulate her very sensitive areas such as the nipples and clitoris.

(b) As the excitement mounts, she starts breathing hard. This may be accompanied by moans and gasps of pleasure.

(c) With further excitement, there is an increase in the lubrication of her vagina.

(d) She may start moving more with very sensual body movements, signalling that she is ready to be “mounted”.

(e) During the sex act itself, as her husband thrusts in and out of her vagina, varying the tempo from slow to fast and back, her excitement increases progressively and orgasm approaches.

The Orgasmic Phase

(a) Usually begins with a quickening of breath.

(b) The woman then feels a deep, increasing feeling of sweetness/ warmth/excitement in the deep pelvic region which peaks/explodes to involve the whole body.

(c) During the actual peak, there are involuntary movements (movements which you cannot really control) of the pelvis, buttocks, and thighs which can best be described as spasms or jerks in an upward and forward direction of those parts of the body already mentioned.

(d) The jerks may be followed by stiffening of the body at the peak of the jerks.

(e) One slowly recovers from the peak to be engulfed/bathed/ washed in a feeling which can be described as a floating feeling, exhilaration, warmth, satisfaction and well-being.

(f) The clitoral experience can usually be repeated about two or three times depending on the ability of the man to continue stimulation.[3]

How to Deliberately Achieve an Orgasm in the Wife

The key to deliberately achieving orgasm is the clitoris. The clitoris consists of a hooded part on the female external genitalia, at the tip of which is found a button, *(Refer to Fig. 9 on page 114)*.

(a) There must be a reasonable amount of kisses, body stimulation and foreplay. Then the wife will lie on her back and the husband will gently stimulate both the hood and the button of the clitoris with his fingers.

(b) Stimulate your wife best by rubbing the surface of the button and also by rubbing up and down the hood.

(c) The husband should also stimulate the area surrounding the clitoris.

(d) He may transfer some lubrication from his wife's vagina to her clitoris or use artificial lubrication if the need be.

(e) As stimulation continues, the wife should concentrate on her arousal, turning herself, her mind and her emotions loose.

(f) The husband must remember that with the dry finger, there could be irritation and this may rather turn his wife off.

(g) The stimulation may vary from a gentle and delicate touch on the button to firm pressure on the hood.

(h) Stimulation should be continuous and uninterrupted.

(i) When the wife is aroused near an orgasm, she will begin to breathe a little faster, heavier and deeper.

(j) If your wife approaches orgasm but seems to have difficulty moving into it simply continue this arousal procedure; eventually it will happen. (See description of female orgasm, on page 152, to know what exactly will happen).[4]

How to Develop the Female Orgasm

(a) Orgasm in a wife depends on both the co-operation of the man and the woman.

(b) Remember, your mind is the biggest sexual organ.

(c) Whether or not orgasm occurs depends on the degree of control by a woman's brain.

(d) It is important for the woman to feel free.

(e) A woman who has no inhibitions about sex will have an orgasm whereas a woman who has inhibitions may fail to have an orgasm. Usually these inhibitions reduce as time passes in marriage and the couple has become more relaxed.

(f) Forget about yourself and who you are.

(g) Do not link sexual activity to perfect emotional climates which

are rare in real life.

(h) Sex can go on satisfactorily amidst the normal day to day pressures and stresses of work, the home, children and church without being in a state of ecstatic love. The key is to de-link.

(i) Wives possess the key of de-linking.

(j) Almost every woman can have an orgasm by being sufficiently relaxed and confident in her marriage to let her husband know her needs, so that he helps her reach orgasm by stimulating her. Sex without the right frame of mind and relaxation will never lead to orgasm in a woman.

(k) In a fulfilling marriage, the husband must be willing and happy to stimulate his wife sexually in the way she wishes.

(l) Ideally, no woman should be embarrassed about asking her husband to do this. But because many women are ashamed to ask, they reduce their sexual pleasure.

(m) Ask your husband to do to your body what is exciting and pleasurable.

3 Principles for Achieving Orgasm

1. Principle of the right attitude in both partners.

2. Principle of the right technique—clitoral stimulation.[5]

3. Principle of persistence—sometimes years.

Many husbands fail to bring their wives to orgasm simply because they stop the arousal procedures before the wives are fully aroused. It is desirable that the wife approaches orgasm before the penis is inserted. With the right attitude, the right technique and persistence, you will succeed and you will have sexual happiness in your marriage.

Further Ways of Achieving Orgasm

After having achieved orgasm by clitoral stimulation:

(a) Know that orgasms can be achieved by the penis moving in the vagina.

(b) The woman's orgasm can also be achieved such that it is simultaneous with the man's orgasm.

Chapter 35

Common Fears About Sex

Fears of a Virgin

A woman who has never had sex is usually apprehensive about her first sexual experience. Her fear is that the sex act will be very painful and will be accompanied by a lot of bleeding. She also wonders whether she would be able to endure the entire process. Other women's exaggerated accounts about their first experiences can make her very scared.

The virgin should encourage herself that if others have been through it and survived, she can also make it.

Virginity

What to Do to Overcome Your Fears Before the Wedding

1. Psychological preparation: Get yourself psychologically prepared for being naked, having sex, going through the initial pain. (See Figures 9 and 10 on pages 114-115). Study the anatomy of the female external genitalia, (Refer to Fig. 9 on page 115).

2. The bride should locate, on her own body, her vagina, and try to gently insert her finger. This will help her distinguish between the 3 different outlets—vagina, urethra and anus.

3. Trim your pubic hair. (See Chapter 29 on "What to Do on the Wedding Night")

Fear of the Inability to Satisfy Each Other

The couple must know that sexual experience is not a performance. It is an expression of love.[1] They should just relax and get to know each other. The first experience will obviously not be the best, but it gets better and better as the days, weeks, months and years go by.

Fears about the Body

1. The Size of the Penis

Below are excerpts from the book, "Act of Marriage":

(a) Almost every engorged penis is the same size (six to eight inches) no matter how large the man. However, the soft penis will measure anywhere from two inches to eight inches in length. Research has yet to explain adequately why some shrink more than others.

(b) The male organ need only be two to three inches long to do a superlative job of lovemaking, for the only part of the inner vagina that is sensitive to touch or pressure extends from the outer lips to approximately two to three inches inside.

(c) In all probability no man's sexual organ has ever really been too small, yet millions regularly fear that possibility. Therefore, it can be devastating for a wife to joke about her husband's organ.[2] No penis is too small to do a good enough job, so no man should feel inadequate.

2. The Female Breast

(a) God, who is a God of variety, created each woman with a particular type of breast that best suits her. Some women have small cute breasts, others big busty breasts and yet others have a size in between these two extremes. Now, no matter the size or type of breast a woman has, the beauty of the breast is still intact.

(b) Husbands need to realize that the breast in the dressed up state may look different in the undressed state. Some women may not appear substantially busty or may look almost flat-chested when dressed up, but when they undress you will appreciate that they are also endowed with beautiful God-given breasts.

(c) Other women who appear busty and look full and rounded may in the undressed state have the breast actually starting much lower down on the chest and a flattening of that part of the chest which before looked rounded. Some men therefore get disappointed when

they find this difference and they think that their wives' breasts have fallen or are "spoilt". This is actually not the case. What they are seeing is the standard architecture of that type of breast which was just given a different look by a good supporting brassiere.

(d) Wives should be confident about the beauty of their mature unveiled breasts and should display them confidently to themselves and to their husbands.

(e) Preserve whatever type of breasts you have by using:

i. Brassieres that provide good support.

ii. Whatever the size of your breast, you MUST wear a brassiere.

iii. The breasts must be continuously supported with a firm brassiere throughout pregnancy. This is necessary because the breasts increase greatly in size during pregnancy.

(f) The nipple and its surrounding area is the part of the breast which gives sexual arousal. Generally speaking, there is very little difference in the sizes of women's nipples. Therefore, no matter the size of a woman's breast, she can be sexually aroused by playing with and sucking her nipples.

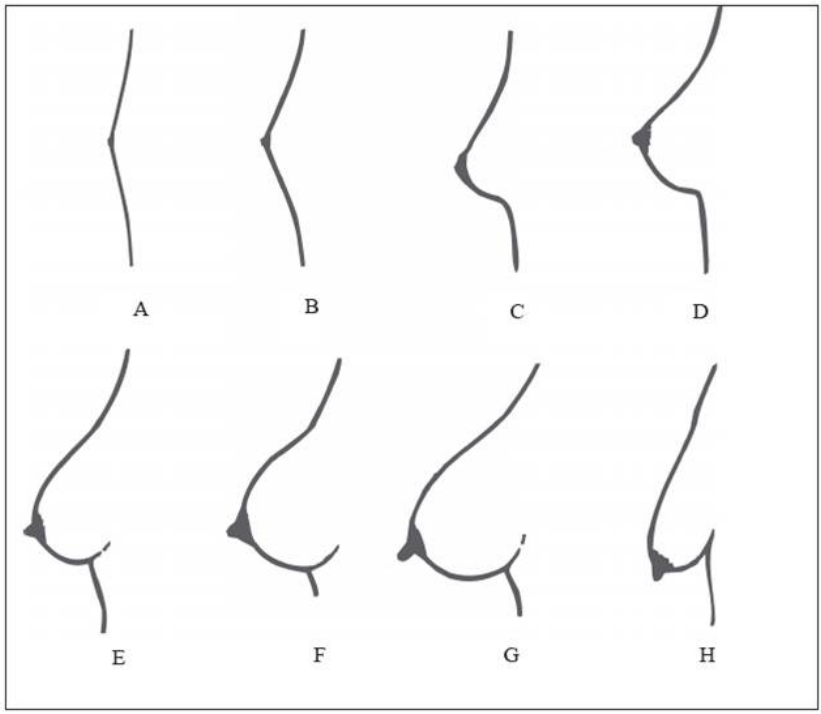

Fig. 25: The outline of the female breast at various stages of development and functionality (A) Before puberty (B) at puberty (C) adolescent (D) adult, conical type (E) adult, well-developed hemispherical type, (F) in pregnancy (G) in lactation (H) pendulous, in older women. (G) in lactation (H) pendulous, in older women.[3]

3. Fear of Impotence (An inability to have a hard and erect penis)

(a) Impotence is defined as the inability to achieve an erection. 90% of impotence is from the mind and can be cured.

(b) Causes of impotence include: loss of energy from tiredness or old age, fears of comparison with previous partners, not being able to satisfy his wife, busy schedules, bitterness, guilt from adultery, ridicule, unreasonable expectations, passive wife, depression, etc.[4]

General counselling and obedience to the WORD of GOD solves most of these problems.

Chapter 36

Sex for Reproduction

Many couples fear that they may not be able to have children. To achieve conception, you must:

(a) Have sex regularly and frequently—at least every other day.

If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for YIELDING pacifieth great offences.

Ecclesiastes 10:4

(b) Have sex scientifically using your knowledge of the times of ovulation.

(c) Improve sperm count by abstaining 2 - 3 days before ovulation. Men should not wear tight or nylon pants.

(d) The woman should avoid post-coital douche or getting up immediately after coitus.

(e) Seek medical attention when necessary. It is the duty of BOTH the husband and wife to seek medical care if required and to go through every test or examination necessary to achieve a pregnancy. This is not the time to apportion blame but rather to draw closer to each other.

(f) Understand that a couple is not infertile unless they have been living together for more than a year and having regular sexual intercourse (at least every other day) without any form of contraception whatsoever.

(g) Know that most people are fertile.

(h) Be aware that the commonest cause of infertility is blocked tubes following infected abortions and sexually transmitted diseases. Hence if the above history is non-existent, there is very

little to fear.

(i) Trust GOD. But if you have the above history, you should be open and frank to each other about it and be aware that such a problem is possible.

Signs of Ovulation

Every woman should know and be able to notice when she is ovulating[1]. It is during ovulation that a woman is most fertile[2]. These are the signs of ovulation:

1. The vaginal mucus of a woman can be used to determine ovulation.

There is normally some amount of cloudy secretions or mucus in the vagina. At ovulation time IT BECOMES CLEARER, MORE COPIOUS AND THICKER. It becomes sticky and stretches out between two fingers like chewing gum. These changes are noticeable only to the person who checks the mucus on a daily basis. The mucus can be checked early every morning by the woman herself or her husband.

2. Some women have a "pain of ovulation" known as mittelschmertz.

This pain occurs on one side or the other of the lower abdomen depending on which ovary is ovulating. This pain, if it occurs, can help a woman know that she is ovulating at that time.

3. The temperature of a woman rises by about 1˚C on the day of ovulation and remains at that level till the end of the month.

The temperature can be taken every morning before the woman gets out of bed. This is the basal body temperature. You will notice the rise in temperature on the day of ovulation. It is important to note that the temperature recording may also be affected by a fever due to malaria or infections, for example.

Note:

(a) These methods are to help time ovulation, as the time of

ovulation varies in some women because they do not have very regular cycles.

(b) When a woman's cycle is a regular 28-day cycle, she ovulates on the 13th or 14th day.

(c) Day 1 is the first day of the monthly menstrual period, i.e the first day you notice blood.

(d) Please note: If your cycle is not a regular 28-day cycle , your ovulating day is not on day 13 or 14 but is actually 14 days before your next period. This makes it difficult to identify the day of ovulation in a very irregular cycle. A woman with an irregular cycle must use the other methods of detection to identify the exact time of ovulation.

Chapter 37

Grey Areas on Sex

1. Oral Sex

I am fully aware of some Christian opinions that do not approve of oral sex. However, both as a minister of the Gospel and a medical doctor, I am presenting an opinion which I believe is both biblically and medically sound. As everyone is entitled to a view, I express this view also after consultations with other seasoned marriage counsellors, that it can be an exciting and innovative variant to positive marital sex.

Interestingly enough, wide reading and research have shown that there are several other Christian ministers, who approve of oral sex. I do therefore affirm that oral sex is one of the grey areas of sex. I believe that the matter is one of personal preference and taste. It must be agreeable to both parties in the marriage, as love “seeks not her own”.

In oral sex, the woman receives the male penis into her mouth in order to stimulate the glans of the penis with her lips and tongue. Also the man may stimulate the woman with his tongue on her clitoris. Both forms of oral sex can bring an orgasm if prolonged. It is another avenue for foreplay and it should not replace formal sex. It does not mean ejaculating into the mouth.

(a) Wherever fingers can be used, tongue and lips could also be used. Of course, cleanliness is a must.

(b) If it is OK to kiss a wife’s lips, nipples, and body, why not her sexual organs (clitoris and labia minora). Otherwise, we are relegating sexual organs to a “dirty” category compared to the rest of the body—but our whole body is wonderfully and perfectly made.

(c) Furthermore, stimulating the clitoris orally is more gentle than if

done with fingers, and there is no lubrication problem. Also, a husband finds it much more exciting when he uses his mouth to bring his wife to a climax.

(d) Oral sex should not replace genital sex, but should only be used in addition to hands and fingers during foreplay and at other times when genital intercourse is not possible—such as during periods of illness in the man or woman or during heavy pregnancy.

What the Man Should Know and Do to Practise Oral Sex

a. Women also enjoy having oral sex done to them.

b. Oral sex can lead to orgasm.[1]

c. The woman must wash down before.

d. The man should kiss, suck and lick the clitoris and the vaginal opening.

e. The man may use mouthwash afterwards to prevent a sore throat.

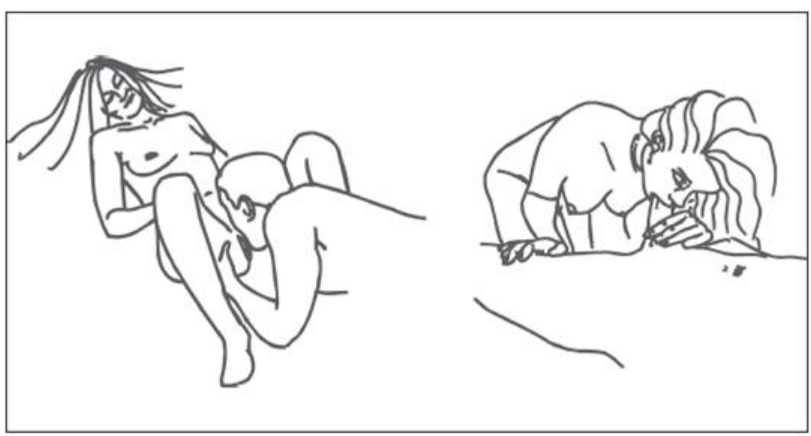

Fig. 26: Oral Sex

What the Woman Should Know and Do to Practise Oral Sex

a. Men enjoy having oral sex done to them.

b. The man must wash down before.

c. The pubic hair should be clipped low.

d. The woman should kiss and suck the penis.

e. The woman should not bite the penis.

f. The man should not ejaculate into the woman's mouth.

g. She may taste some secretions, which are harmless.

h. The woman may use mouthwash afterwards to prevent a sore throat.

Warning: Either partner can contract an infection especially in the mouth or throat after oral sex so it is important to ensure that the genitals are clean and nice-smelling, by washing thoroughly with soap or bathing before engaging in oral sex.

If both of you enjoy oral sex and find it pleasant, then it will be an exciting and innovative variant to routine marital sex.[2]

2. Anal Sex

Anal sex is the introduction of the penis into the anus of the woman. The normal function of the anus is a passage for faeces and not to receive the penis. Anal sex is therefore an unnatural use of that part of the body.

And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman…

Romans 1:27

We therefore do not recommend it.

3. Sex During Menstruation

There are some questions associated with having sex during menstruation.[3]

And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 15:19

In Leviticus 15:19, sex during menstruation was forbidden. However, we are not under the Law. If we are under the Law, then we are under all the different laws. A good example of a law that we clearly do not implement is the law of death to all non-virgins who marry.

But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

Deuteronomy 22:20,21

The ceremonial laws of the Old Testament teach us PRINCIPLES, but we are not under strict observance of these laws. Leviticus 15:19 gives us a general principle that sex during menstruation is to be avoided. However, it may be necessary for a couple to have sex even during the wife's menstrual period.

Reasons why it may be necessary to have sex during menstruation

(a) If the husband and wife, are separated for long periods and have a rare opportunity for a brief sleepover, it would be cruel to rob them of this rare and infrequent opportunity to have sex.

(b) If a husband has been away for a long time and has just come back only to leave again.

(c) If the husband is going to be away for a long time.

(d) If there is an uncontrollable desire for sex.

Things to do if it is necessary to have sex during menstruation

(a) The woman must wash the vagina thoroughly just before sex, which will result in very little or no blood in the vagina.

(b) The sex act should be a quick one.

(c) The man could use a condom.

(d) There should be thorough washing afterwards.

4. Sex During and after Pregnancy

(a) There is no medical reason for couples to refrain from having sex during pregnancy. Sex can and must continue normally in pregnancy[4]. Please note that many marriages start to break down during pregnancies, and adultery and unfaithfulness is well known to occur at such times. So expectant wives, sit up; you are not a sick person because you are pregnant. You are just pregnant.

(b) Sex can continue throughout pregnancy, from the earliest stage of pregnancy even to the day before birth if necessary. Please note the following:

i. Be gentle.

ii. Try different positions when the stomach enlarges so you don't lie on it heavily. The large stomach will help you to experiment with other sex positions.

(c) There are some cases where sex is to be avoided. These are:

i. Threatened abortion i.e., threatening loss of the pregnancy.

ii. Bleeding during the pregnancy.

iii. A history of repeated loss of pregnancies.

In all cases, see your doctor and he will tell you what you can do. Men, it is a time for self-control! You may at this time also practise superficial sex, i.e. sex at the opening of the vagina without going deep, or lying on the woman's stomach. Generally speaking, all sex in pregnancy should be GENTLE!

(d) After Delivery:

i. Abstinence after delivery is important for about 4 to 6 weeks for

the following reasons: to allow the wife's vagina and birth canal to heal. Some may be recovering from an episiotomy. to prevent introduction of infection in the lady. The lochia (the fluid which comes out of the vagina after the birth) is a very infection-prone fluid and strict hygiene is important!

ii. Sexual happiness can continue after 4 to 6 weeks.

iii. Husbands, be gentle. There may be some pain or discomfort.

iv. Wives, be in the flow! You may experience a level of happiness you've never had before.

5. Sex During Church Activities

(a) The verse below says that after having sex, you are unclean for a while. However, once again, we are not under the Law.

The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 15:18

(b) You are free to have sex before and after church activities or prayer. It does not demean your spirituality.

6. Sex During Fasting

(a) Fasting is abstinence from food. It does not also imply staying away from sex.

(b) At certain levels of fasting however, you may want to abstain from sex to help you concentrate.

(c) Having sex does not make you unclean or unholy. The marriage bed is undefiled.

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Hebrews 13:4

(d) If you decide to abstain from sex during fasting, you must BOTH decide to do so for a definite period. Also decide (together) when you will resume your normal “activities”. This is the meaning of “except it be with consent”.

(e) Remember after fasting, to come back together quickly, lest the devil tempt you.

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Corinthians 7:5

SECTION 10

THE PRINCIPLES OF SEX

Chapter 38

Assorted Biblical Principles 1-12

No. 1 Principle of Humility in Sex

Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekelsof silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not puther away all his days.

Deuteronomy 22:29

(a) It is necessary for both the man and woman to be humble in order to have sexual happiness in marriage. It takes humility to be naked or to bare your private parts and be in certain positions for sex.

(b) Some people are just too proud to get deeply involved in sex. Humility will open new chapters in your sex life.[1]

No. 2 Principle of Staying Together to Discover Each Other

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shallcheer up his wife which he hath taken.

Deuteronomy 24:5

(a) We recommend that newly married couples spend their first night together at a place where they can have maximum privacy e.g a hotel, and also to take some time off for a honeymoon.

(b) It is also important that they avoid pregnancy in the first few months or even a year so that they can adjust to each other.[2]

No. 3 Principle of Drinking from Your Own Cistern

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

Proverbs 5:15

(a) A man must make a conscious effort to be continually satisfied with his wife. This applies to the woman as well.

(b) It is possible to be satisfied by one woman or one man all your life.[3]

No. 4 Principle of Sex Likened to Drinking Water

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

Proverbs 5:15

(a) Having sex is likened to drinking water, which is a natural process that is done often and on reflex. How often do you drink water?

No. 5 Principle of the Blessed Fountain

Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

Proverbs 5:16,17

(a) The fountain is likened to an ejaculating penis or vice versa. A fountain is only blessed when it is flowing with water and that is the same with the penis.

(b) One must have sex often and regularly to keep the fountain blessed and the marriage blessed. The fountain is for the home and not for strangers.[4]

No. 6 Principle of the Satisfying Breast

Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at alltimes; and be thou ravished always with her love.

Proverbs 5:19

(a) The husband should be satisfied with his wife's breast. In much

the same way, her lips, buttocks, thighs, clitoris, and vagina must satisfy you. Let all these be a joy to you because they are a gift from God.

(b) Have sex with her as often as possible! She is for your enjoyment and satisfaction.

(c) Your wife's breasts are beautiful. Take time to look at them, play with them and enjoy them.[5]

No. 7 Principle of Satisfaction at All Times

Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

Proverbs 5:19

(a) You must satisfy each other at all times. This means in the morning, afternoon, and evening. It means after one year or ten years in marriage, at anytime, anywhere; you must satisfy each other.

(b) Always means ALWAYS.

No. 8 Principle of Being Ravished with Your Spouse

Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

Proverbs 5:19

(a) You must make a conscious effort to admire the different parts of your spouse's body and beauty. Stand and gaze at each other; be overwhelmed with the beauty of your partner.

No. 9 Principle of the Importance of Kissing

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

Song of Solomon 1:2

(a) Kissing is an important form of intimacy between a couple. It is a way in which a couple can be intimate without going all the way to make love all the time. It is an important form of contact and it is encouraged in marriage.

(b) Kissing whilst making love is exciting.

NB: The practice of kissing can easily and gradually fade out of marriage—a couple must beware of this. Make it a point to greet each other at home with a long mouth to mouth kiss. Outside the home, a short mouth to mouth peck will do.

No. 10 Principle of Having Confidence in Oneself

I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Song of Solomon 1:5,6

(a) Confidence is very important in any relationship. You have to have confidence in yourself[6]. You are nice, you are comely; fearfully and wonderfully made. You may be black or fair but you are beautiful and comely. You may have big or small breasts, but you are beautiful, comely and UNIQUE.

(b) You must also have confidence in your ability to have sex as you learn to do it better.

(c) Avoid shattering your spouse's confidence by refraining from making derogatory statements about the breasts, hips, size of genitals, stomach, legs, spots, and scars.[7]

No. 11 Principle of Enhancing Your Beauty with Jewellery

Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold. We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

Song of Solomon 1:10,11

(a) Jewellery makes one more beautiful. Learn to wear jewellery, even at home.

No. 12 Principle of Arousing Love

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

Song of Solomon 2:7

(a) Love can be stirred up by speaking nicely to each other, treating each other nicely and surprising each other with nice little things.

(b) When you have something nice to say to your partner, don't keep it, speak up.

(c) Say "sorry" and "thank you" when you have to, and say "I love you" always.

Chapter 39

Assorted Biblical Principles 13-24

No. 13 Principle of Belonging to Each Other

My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 2:16

Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

1 Corinthians 7:3,4

(a) "To belong to" means "to own". When you own something, you can have it at anytime, and anywhere. So it is in marriage.

(b) You belong to each other and you must have that attitude that I belong to my wife and she belongs to me.

(c) So bear in mind that you can make love with your spouse or be made love to at anytime.[1]

No. 14 Principle of Being Flexible and As Active As a Roe

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

Song of Solomon 2:17

(a) A roe is a flexible and active animal. The wife ought to be flexible and active during sexual intercourse[2]. She should not play a passive role and wait for things to be done to her. Rather she should be active and flexible. She should move her body and waist during sex to bring pleasure to both herself and to her husband.[3]

(b) A dull and boring wife will drive away her husband. Don't be a cadaver—yet!

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

No. 15 Principle of the Woman Initiating Sex and Longing after Sex

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth…

Song of Solomon 3:1,2

(a) We have the mentality that sex is initiated only by the husband. This is untrue.

(b) A good Christian wife must at times initiate sex. Her husband must see her desiring and actually wanting sex.[4]

No. 16 Principle of Admiring and Speaking about Each Other's Beauty

Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.

Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to

the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Song of Solomon 4:1-7

Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 4:2-7

(a) Your partner cannot know what you are thinking about till you say it.

(b) It is important that you speak about the beauty of your partner. We often speak only when there is something negative to say. Why not speak when there is something positive to say? [5]

(c) What you say will be a seed that will lead to confidence and joy in your partner.

No. 17 Principle of Admiring and Enjoying Every Part of the Body

Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 4:2-7

(a) Take time to explore and search out the intricate details of your spouse's body. Notice how the passage describes in details different

parts of the woman's body.

(b) Some couples have been married for a long time and have still not explored and discovered the various contours, "hills", "valleys", and sensitive spots of their partner's body.

No. 18 Principle of Your Body and Garments Smelling Nice During Sex

How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.

Song of Solomon 4:10,11

(a) A good body odour is conducive for having sex.[6]

(b) A bad body odour from sweat and dirt can put one off.

(c) A good wife or husband should use deodorant, creams and perfume in abundance habitually and when having sex.[7]

No. 19 Principle of the Private Parts Being a Sweet Smelling Garden with Pleasant Fruits

A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Song of Solomon 4:12-16

(a) A wife should make sure that her vulva/vagina is always clean and sweet-smelling, like a sweet garden.

(b) The use of sweet smelling creams in this area in moderate amounts is encouraged. Since the vulva is likened to a garden, it must be kept neat and trim by occasional cutting or shaving, which even helps the garden to have different looks and appearances. This will enhance sexual excitement. An overgrown garden looks uninviting and dirty.

(c) Make your garden inviting. The same obviously applies to the man.

No. 20 Principle of Being Welcoming and Ever Ready

I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

Song of Solomon 5:1-6

(a) The husband/wife must be ever ready and welcoming. Do not be angry, unwelcoming, or be grudging as you yield.[8]

(b) A naked woman with a smiling face is very different from a naked woman with an angry or unwilling face. After several sessions of unwilling sex, a man may withdraw. This can even lead to adultery, Note verse 6 above.

No. 21 Principle of Answering for Yourself Why Your Beloved

Is Better than Others

What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

Song of Solomon 5:9

(a) You must be convinced in yourself that you married the right person.

(b) Give yourself several reasons why your spouse is better than others.[9]

(c) Learn to see the advantages and benefits that he or she brings. DO NOT allow negative things to cloud out your appreciation of your spouse.

No. 22 Principle that Your Beloved Is the Best

My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

Song of Solomon 5:10

(a) Believe that your beloved is indeed the best amongst all the other options.

No. 23 Principle of Not Overwhelming Your Partner As You Look Upon Him/Her

Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

Song of Solomon 6:5

(a) A modest partner may be embarrassed by staring eyes. Learn the beauty of having sex with different levels of lighting ranging from bright light, dim light, coloured light, twilight to no light. They have different effects.

(b) Do not embarrass your partner. It will reduce his/her confidence.

No. 24 Principle of Allowing Your Husband to Gaze on You

Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee…

Song of Solomon 6:13

(a) Wives should practise nakedness at home.

(b) Become confident with undressing before your partner.[10]

(c) Experiment with sleeping naked, standing or walking naked around the house, and try different types of exposure, such as the lithotomy position.

Chapter 40

Assorted Biblical Principles 25-33

No. 25 Principle of the Importance of One's Hair

Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.

Song of Solomon 7:5

(a) A woman's hair contributes greatly to her beauty[1]. If it is covered by a hair net or a cap, part of the beauty is taken away. Do not unknowingly give the best of your beauty to outsiders and treat your husband to your less beautiful covered hair. Let him always see your beautiful hair even during sleep or sex.

(b) Take time to do your hair and do not stop investing in your personal beauty.[2]

No. 26 Principle that Breasts Are Beautiful

This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

Song of Solomon 7:7

(a) Breasts are beautiful. Look after them well by always wearing a firm, supporting, good brassiere. Show them to your husband and let him be overwhelmed by these nice "grapes".

(b) A husband must know that his wife's breasts are beautiful no matter the shape or size or age. Enjoy them and let them satisfy you all your days.

(c) As time passes, the look of the breasts will change. This does not mean they are spoilt. Learn to appreciate the beauty of your wife's breasts at every stage of her life. In other words, the breasts of an eighteen-year-old woman are different and beautiful, as well as

those of one who is thirty years old and so on. There is a special beauty for each age.

No. 27 Principle of Having Good Breath

I said, "I will climb the palm tree; I will take hold of its fruit." May your breasts be like the clusters of the vine, the fragrance of your breath like apples,

Song of Solomon 7:8 (NIV)

(a) Good breath is important to help in kissing and intimate relations. Have good breath by brushing your teeth and using mouthwash when necessary.

(b) A couple must be able to tell each other when there is a problem with the breath.

No. 28 Principle of Enhanced Joy Away from Home

Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

Song of Solomon 7:11,12

(a) Do not miss the opportunity for enhanced sex whilst away from home. Outside your usual environment, sex is likely to be more exciting. Don't miss such opportunities, from the honeymoon to trips away together.

No. 29 Principle of Having Sex at Any Time of the Day

Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

Song of Solomon 7:12

(a) Having sex at different times of the day produces different effects and different feelings. Do not miss the opportunity to have

sex at different times.

(b) Try sex at dawn, try it in the morning, try it in the afternoon. Try it at any time.

No. 30 Principle of Developing Appropriate Techniques in Sex

His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

Song of Solomon 8:3

(a) Sex is an art which can be learnt and improved. Learn what to do, how to do it and when to do it.

(b) Improve yourself as a sexual being. Just as you learn other things, learn about sex.

No. 31 Principle of Rapid Sexual Responses

Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a"young hart upon the mountains of spices.

Song of Solomon 8:14

(a) Do not delay your wife/husband unduly when he/she is ready for sex. Don't say "after lunch", "tomorrow" or "later". Do it now.

(b) It is cruel to turn away your spouse when you can see he/she has a strong desire or even an erection.

No. 32 Principle of the Importance and Beauty of Virginity

We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar. I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

Song of Solomon 8:8-10

(a) Protect your virginity till the day you marry. Do not think that because you will marry anyway, you can just have sex.

(b) You can be a virgin in your body, in your mind and in your emotions. If you:

i. Confess your sins.

ii. Forgive yourself and let go of the past.

iii. Continue to live a pure life till you are married. This will make you a "virgin" in your mind and your emotions.

(c) Don't come into the marriage with an attitude of a well-trained expert who is going to train your partner.

No. 33 Principle of Being in Love Forever

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

Song of Solomon 8:6,7

(a) Because marriage is permanent, you can let yourself go without any fear.

(b) Because it is forever, you can take your time to discover and learn about sex slowly and enjoy it all your days.

MARRIAGE is forever!

SECTION 11

MORE ON TEMPERAMENTS

Chapter 41

The Temperaments and Sex

The Sanguine Husband and Sex

1. He is so responsive it does not take much to turn him on.[1]

2. He is so open about everything he does that his wife is always aware of his mood.

3. Has a great appetite for everything including lovemaking.

4. Most have very few hang-ups about sex. They usually enjoy it.

5. Sex, like food, is one of the most important things in life to them. They are usually reluctant to take “no” for an answer when they want food or sex.

6. Can easily be hurt and feel deflated if his wife does not respond to his gestures of love.

7. May be more easily unfaithful if not sexually satisfied because:

a. The conquest of another woman is important to satisfy his ego and he finds lonely, unfulfilled women easy prey to his charm.

b. He is weak-willed and emotionally excitable and is therefore open to the unscrupulous woman.

The Sanguine Wife and Sex

1. She enjoys sex:

• It is important to her.[2]

• She is unrestrained about sex.

• She will do almost anything sexually, if taught.

• She overcomes most sexual inhibitions and can become aggressive.

• She is not cadaveric in sex.

2. Men feel comfortable in her presence.

3. Her charming personality makes her a hit for all types of men and in her naiveté she can turn them on without knowing. She usually thinks she's just being friendly.

4. Does not take too much coaxing to get her into the mood to make love.

5. Usually maintains a good attitude about sex in spite of what she might have heard before marriage.

6. She can be sexually aggressive and do the inviting.

7. She has a tremendous desire to please her husband and with a reasonable amount of encouragement will usually succeed in this area of marriage provided her partner does not hammer away at her faults in other areas.

The Choleric Husband and Sex

1. He does not indulge in much foreplay. He just wants it quickly and then he is on his way! He soon learns, however, that he has to be tender and loving.

2. Appears to be a great lover on the surface.[3]

3. Unable to lavish affection on spouse, and impatient—this makes adjustment difficult for wife.

4. He is likely to take his wife into the bedroom without the slightest sex education himself. This is because he is usually impulsive and thinks that things will work out.

5. Learns quickly. Is practical and will therefore make necessary changes to lovemaking. If he finds that affection is exciting and that watching the woman he loves respond to his love is extremely fulfilling he will go for it.

The Choleric Wife and Sex

1. She can either make her husband very happy or unhappy sexually. If she has had a good upbringing, teaching and parents, she is exciting and creative. If she has had bad teaching, molestation by a parent/an adult, or other traumatic experiences, she is very difficult sexually (because she is opinionated).[4]

2. If she observed a warm, loving relationship between her parents while growing up, she will enter marriage expecting to enjoy lovemaking and because cholerics usually achieve what they set out to do, she and her husband will not be disappointed in their sexual life.

3. If she has been raised in an unhappy home or environment, has been molested, or often endured traumatic experiences in childhood or has a mind that "sex is dirty" she may encounter serious difficulty in relating properly to her husband. This is because the choleric forms such strong opinions about things that once she has that idea, it is difficult (but not impossible) to change.

4. Since choleric wives are not usually given to open affection they may stifle their husband's advances before their own motor rolls into action.

5. If not spirit-filled, the choleric wife may emasculate her husband by dominating and leading him in everything, including sex.

6. If she isn't interested in sex herself, she and her usually phlegmatic husband may go for long periods without sex.

7. The choleric wife must not interpret a phlegmatic husband's passivity about sex to mean he enjoys abstinence. In the end, an explosion will occur that will have a very serious and undesirable effect on the marriage.

The Melancholic Husband and Sex

1. Is a supreme idealist.[5]

2. Usually goes into marriage without sex education because he believes the ideal will happen.

3. If his wife is amorous, exciting and very expressive, things may work out fine.

4. If he marries someone as naïve as he is, he and his wife may return from the honeymoon depressed.

5. A shaky sex life can make a melancholic husband very unhappy and depressed. This depression will turn his wife off.

6. Melancholics usually find it difficult to seek counselling and wait until their marriage is almost breaking to get help.

7. The melancholic husband is able to express true love more than any other temperament.

8. He is usually a loyal and faithful partner unless he indulges in impure thoughts that lead to promiscuity.

9. When the melancholic loves his wife he will almost overextend himself in thoughtfulness, kindness and emotion.

10. He is usually very romantic. He does the things that delight the romantic heart of a woman like playing soft music, dimming lights, using perfume, etc.

11. His analytical nature makes him learn quickly what pleases his wife and then he enjoys bringing her fulfilment.

12. If everything goes well for them they make great lovers. But since life does not turn out perfectly and the melancholic is such a perfectionist, he may almost refuse to accept anything less than perfection.

13. Little things like dirty dishes in the sink, or a messy floor can turn a melancholic off sexually.

14. He is likely to interpret, as rejection, his wife's lack of immediate response to sex when he initiates lovemaking. If his wife tries to play a little hard-to-get-sex he is likely to think she does not desire him and may give up before she can reveal her true feelings.

The Melancholic Wife and Sex

1. Is an unpredictable love partner because she has the greatest of all mood swings.[6]

2. On some occasions she can be as exciting and stimulating as any sanguine. On other occasions she has absolutely no interest in anything, including love. At times, she may meet her husband at the door and sweep him of his feet right into the bedroom but at other times she may ignore his arrival completely.

3. She is the supreme romantic and her moods are as apparent as the noonday sun.

4. When in the mood for love, she resorts to dinner by candlelight, soft music, and heavy perfume.

5. She is capable of enjoying ecstatic love at heights that would choke other temperaments, but she does not do that frequently.

6. To her, quality in sex life is preferable to quantity.

7. Of all the temperaments she is the one who gives love as a reward for good behaviour and no man enjoys that.

8. She can be excessively religious about sex especially if her mother had a problem in this area.

9. She may use religious arguments and Bible verses to excuse her sexual abstinence.

10. Probably, the real reason for her sexual abstinence may be that she has a fixed idea before marriage that sex is not a good thing.

11. She may hardly give herself the opportunity to learn that sex is good and desirable.

12. Is usually interested in sex when she wants to get pregnant and have children.

13. Seemingly little things can be turned into huge problems for the melancholic wife, for example, her husband's

a. inability to balance the cheque book,

b. failure to run an errand,

c. neglect to bath.

These may thoroughly upset her and send her into quiet revenge. She has to realize that she is cheating herself out of both the enjoyment of lovemaking and the loving approval of her husband.

14. She has the potential of being an exciting and fulfilling love partner if her weaknesses do not overpower her strengths.

The Phlegmatic Husband and Sex

1. Does not say much about the bedroom life—is close-mouthed concerning his personal life.

2. Most comments about his intimate life will come from his angry spouse who is usually also very biased.

3. Usually would have little trouble gaining the love of his wife because he rarely embarrasses or insults her, sarcasm is just not his way and he will usually not embarrass her publicly or say anything derogatory.

4. Since he rarely gets angry or creates irritation, he usually extinguishes his partners fire by a soft answer before bedtime.

5. Phlegmatics are more prone to letting their wives initiate lovemaking.

6. His wife may soon feel unloved because he does not assume initiative in the bedroom—wife sometimes loses respect for him because he does not assert his manhood.

7. May produce resentment in his wife because he is stingy, politely stubborn and self-indulgent, which is equal to being selfish.

8. Usually finds it difficult to talk about anything and therefore does not tell his wife what he finds exciting about lovemaking.

9. He will silently endure less enjoyable relations with his wife for years and therefore rob both he and his wife of many ecstatic sexual

experiences.

The Phlegmatic Wife and Sex

1. Will usually give in to her more forceful mate than to create turmoil.

2. Is easily satisfied and will often turn her attention to her children if trouble arises between her husband and herself.

3. She rarely initiates lovemaking but will almost never turn her husband down because she wants to please him.

4. Her lovemaking is greatly affected by fear and anxiety (she may fear pregnancy, disclosure, embarrassment and a host of other real and imagined dilemmas). She can easily be afraid that her husband may lose respect for her if she appears too eager or forward in lovemaking.

5. She must learn to create and maintain interest in her personal appearance like hair, attire and weight to please her husband.

6. Her disorganization may cause such resentment in her husband that it may spill into their bedroom life.

7. Her husband must endeavour to be a strong, gentle and thoughtful lover who learns how a woman functions best and take time to arouse her to orgasm.

8. Once she learns the art of lovemaking, her desire for the experience will overpower her tendency to be passive thus making her an exciting partner.

9. Her husband must be someone who verbally assures her of her worth and his love so that she can draw courage to overcome her fears.

10. Must learn to overcome her inability to speak about the way she feels and communicate with her spouse about their sex life.

Chapter 42

Developing Spiritually Mature Temperaments

How to Be a Spiritually Mature Sanguine Husband or Wife

1. Stick to moral principles—one man, one wife!

2. Walk in the Spirit in your thought life: "...make not provision for the flesh..." (Romans 13:14). If a sanguine indulges in immoral fantasies he will soon fan his passions out of control.

3. Encourage your wife to be expressive. A loving, responsive and affectionate wife who freely lets her husband know how much she enjoys his love will keep many men.

4. His wife must be the sole object of his exuberant affection. He must avoid flirtations and flattery of other women (thereby reassuring his own wife and other women's husbands). He should concentrate on bringing joy and fulfilment to his wife.

5. Talk less and listen more—God gave you two ears and one mouth—be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger. See the pitfalls of exaggeration, and try not to exaggerate.

6. Put away self-centredness. Most sanguines tend to be self-centred and self absorbed—they often do not remember people, their names and other details about them.

7. Carry a personal notebook so you jot down important things like dates, addresses, events etc.

8. Spend time if you must, with people who are a positive influence, and who will challenge you to grow as a Christian.

9. Practise being a good listener—do not interrupt or finish people's sentences for them. Do not plot your sentence when others are speaking.

10. Focus on your heart—"...out of it (the heart) are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). A good heart will lead you to good places.

11. Use your personal popularity to promote good. For example, by engaging in witnessing and interaction.

12. Spread your creativity—at special events at church and for others.

13. Reach out to the lonely—you are a natural people person.

How to Be a Spiritually Mature Choleric Husband or Wife

1. Ask yourself what makes you want to take control.

2. Don't think you know it all—only God does.

3. Be humble.

4. Learn to relax and know that the most important things in life are not just work and achievement but family, spouse, and people—make time for them and demonstrate love.

5. Acknowledge the truth that you are not in control of the universe—let God be God.

6. Realize that you are not naturally a people-person and make a conscious decision to work on that weakness.

7. Learn not to force your advice and opinion on people.

8. Feel free to let others be right sometimes.

9. Watch your tongue and try to be loving.

10. Be courageous, provide leadership, crusade for a good cause, stay productive, remain open and honest for these are your strengths.

11. Learn to forgive—vengeance is the Lord's.

12. Show love and compassion.

13. Understand that many people are not as self-sufficient as you are. Others harbour doubts, unlike the choleric. He must therefore patiently show kindness and encourage his wife in lovemaking and she will be a better performer.

14. You must often give your spouse approval, love and acceptance.

15. You must develop tenderness and affection for your wife and children. The choleric must learn to say , “I love you” frequently and show his wife constantly that he is proud of her.

16. Eliminate sarcasm. Disrespectful, unkind and resentful words from you will turn your wife off.

17. You must be aware of the fact that the threat of an instant choleric explosion prevents your wife from expressing her real emotions to you. This is a hindrance to your love life.

18. The choleric wife must also walk in the spirit so as to conquer her hot temper and sarcastic tongue.

19. She must develop her emotional capability to show love and affection; recognizing that the more she expresses love, the easier it will come.

20. She must learn forgiveness especially for her father—no woman can fully enjoy her husband if she harbours hatred or anger toward her father.

21. Strong-minded, opinionated, often willful choleric wives may vent their frustration and anger on their husbands and stifle their expressions of love.

22. A choleric woman may have this problem because she resisted her father’s affections as a little girl.

23. Not realizing why she was rejected by her father, the choleric girl may increasingly withdraw from her father and refuse to show any normal expressions of emotion toward her father. This will encourage a growing resentment toward men.

24. She must avoid heaping sarcasm, criticism and ridicule on her

husband in the area of sex.

25. Cholerics exude such self-confidence that without saying anything, people naturally feel inadequate. The choleric wife therefore needs to let her husband know how much she values him as a man and a lover—she must express appreciation for the masculinity of her man.

How to Be a Spiritually Mature Melancholic Husband or Wife

1. Lower your standards—we live in an imperfect world where things don't always turn out as you plan. Learn to accept imperfection from yourself and especially from your wife and children. This will liberate you from the bondage of perfectionism.

2. Cultivate a heart of grace and mercy; consider the beam in your own eye when you get absorbed by the speck of others.

3. Develop your sense of humour.

4. Make a conscious effort to overcome depression. That is:

i. Meditate on God's Word and pray daily (Psalm 119:27-28).

ii. Count your blessings (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

iii. Ponder on truths about who you are in Christ and believe them (Romans 8:17).

iv. Set yourself free—make a conscious effort to forgive those who have offended you. Forgiving doesn't make them right but it sets you free (Matthew 6:12-15).

v. Stop, and look for the silver lining in the gray cloud—choose to focus your attention on what's right in the world rather than what's wrong (Philippians 4:6-8).

vi. Realize that depression is frequently biochemical; seek medication if you have to.

5. Be realistic—let go of unrealistic expectations. They only lead to disappointment, bitterness and anger. This is an imperfect world

filled with imperfect people (Romans 3:23).

6. Concern yourself with the needs of others and not just yours.

7. Give unconditional love and not rewarded love.

8. Avoid critical and pessimistic attitudes which are two of your biggest problems. This causes you to become frequently disillusioned when things and people including your spouse don't measure up.

9. Maintain a positive and wholesome thought life by thinking good things and giving thanks in everything.

10. Encourage your spouse with verbal assurances of love and approval.

11. The melancholic wife needs to have a vital relationship with Jesus Christ so that she may enjoy the love, peace and joy He gives, to make her an effective person.

12. Maintain a thankful attitude instead of thinking negatively and being critical so that you will have a happier outlook on life and enjoy more fruitful relationships. You must accept your husband as he is allowing God to make the needed changes. Your submission to him must not depend on his behaviour but on your obedience to Christ.

13. Forget about yourself and love your husband unconditionally so that you will reap a harvest of love in return.

14. You must learn the lesson of forgiveness.

How to Be a Spiritually Mature Phlegmatic Husband or Wife

1. Recognize that your unflinching behaviour can be a form of control for others because once the phlegmatic finds out he can upset others by his refusal to get enthused, he will use this ability as a quiet form of control and chuckle at the antics others go through trying to elicit excitement from him.

2. Recognize sluggishness as laziness and overcome it with hard

work.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

Proverbs 6:6

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12

3. Find ways to motivate yourself.

4. Actively seek to comfort those around you. It's an incredible gift you have. Don't allow your lack of motivation to drown this.

5. Translate your thoughts into actions.

6. Enhance your note-writing and card-sending ministry.

7. Persevere in maintaining old friendships because you're good at that.

8. Be a peacemaker—use your mediation skills.

9. You must accept Christ and acknowledge that you are a sinner; a fact many phlegmatics find difficult to acknowledge.

10. You must walk in the spirit each day so as to gain motivation to overcome your passivity, selfishness, and fears; then you can become an exciting lover.[1]

Chapter 43

Tips on Relating to Your Spouse's Temperament

What to Do If You Are Married to a Sanguine Husband or Wife

1. Attention—sanguines have a burning need to be the centre of attention. They want you to listen to their stories and laugh along even if you've heard them a million times. They want to tell you all the incredible things that happened during the day. Take time to sit down and listen if you want them to feel loved. They desire their spouse's attention and actively seek to draw outsiders' attention to themselves.

2. Do not constantly criticize them for telling stories or exaggerating too much—it wears them down and leaves them unhappy.

3. Do not push sanguines too much to get serious and quieten down because they may become negative and depressed like the melancholic, unmotivated like the phlegmatic and an unavailable workaholic like the choleric.

4. Acceptance—accept your sanguines. It is their deepest need. Don't judge or criticize them. Sanguines need a lot of affection, that is, lots of hugs and kisses. This can be a problem since the sanguine often marries a melancholic who is not naturally affectionate.

5. Help them to organize their lives, work and all. Wife, sometimes, if permissible, help organize him in his office. Keep a copy of his calendar at home and call him with reminders if he doesn't mind. Do this with a servant's heart rather than a nagging attitude.

6. Don't be bossy. Sanguines do not like to be "bossed" around. Assure them that you love them in spite of their imperfections.[1]

7. Give them approval—if you withhold it, they will look for it elsewhere even if it means giving in to office peer pressures to which they are extremely susceptible. The sanguine can easily

become a flirt due to this. Your approval will help the sanguine overcome this weakness.[2]

What to Do if You Are Married to a Choleric Husband or Wife

1. Accept their weaknesses.

2. Maintain a sense of obedience—the choleric husband likes his wife to:

a. be supportive and submissive

b. see things his way

c. co-operate quickly

d. let him take credit.

3. Recognize that your husband has extraordinary instincts and a natural flair for leadership. It will then become easier to follow his lead.

4. The choleric dislikes people who are lazy and not interested in working constantly; they also dislike people who resist their authority, get independent or are not loyal.

5. The husband or wife of a choleric has a right to let his/her spouse know exactly where she stands and whether he's standing on her toes. But once this has been clearly communicated, the other partner should back off and try praying. There's power in prayer—put it to work for you[3]. Constant nagging won't do any good. It may make your husband intractable.

6. Appreciate your spouse's accomplishments: he/she wants recognition for his/her many accomplishments.[4]

What to Do if You Are Married to a Melancholic Husband or Wife

1. Give them stability—Melancholics often have a passion for organization and schedules. They want to see things done in a certain way at a certain time everyday. For them, that creates

stability.

2. Give them space—Melancholics need some space that is exclusively theirs and not for their spouses or children.

3. Give them silence—Give them some quiet moments, like times when there is no TV on; no screaming kids, no phone calls, and no continual chatting. Do this at least once a week.

4. Be sensitive to the things that concern them—at least try! [5]

What to Do if You Are Married to a Phlegmatic Husband or Wife

1. Give him peace—His primary motivation in life is to avoid conflict and chaos. If he comes home to meet children screaming, kitchen torn apart, or a wife who is "ready to kill someone" he will immediately retreat to the settee, TV, or fall asleep quickly. It is his way of escaping "the madness". Make your home a refuge from the storm.

2. Create a peaceful atmosphere with music, candle lights and good scheduling of domestic events.

3. Give the phlegmatic spouse plenty of advance notice about upcoming events. If there's one thing they cannot stand, it is a sudden change of plans. For example, he/she may have his/her heart set on sitting and watching TV and suddenly you spring up a dinner party at the Joneses. They are generally slow to warm up to an idea, and need to prepare themselves ahead of time.

4. Allow him to relax and don't see the relaxation as laziness. It is an emotional need.

5. Praise them—this is the key that can really turn your relationship. Start noticing their fine qualities and begin expressing sincere praise and honest appreciation for them. As you do, they will eventually begin to rest more securely in your relationship and believe that you are serious about your words.

6. If you are married to a phlegmatic, remember to build up their self-worth and calm their fears and give them the peaceful moments

they need. They need you to build their self-worth with loving re-assurance instead of criticizing and belittling them.

7. Reassure them that they are valuable human beings even if they do not accomplish anything of great value according to the world's standards. Your easy-going spouse may never achieve the sort of success the world applauds. That is why they need your applause so much.

8. Frequently remind them of their wonderful qualities; that people love them; that they are loyal and hardworking.

9. Ask God to really help you believe in your phlegmatic husband or wife if you are married to one because they may not seem big on the accomplishments but they will have substance.

10. As you genuinely show that you believe in phlegmatics they will come to believe in themselves and others will believe in them too.

11. Give loving motivation—Don't nag at them.[6]

SECTION 12

THE IMPROVED SEX LIFE

Chapter 44

How to Improve Your Sexual Life

With the passage of time, there is a tendency for the sexual life of a couple to become monotonous, boring and not so exciting. This must not be allowed to happen. The purpose of this lesson is to show couples how to improve and make their sexual lives more exciting and fulfilling.

7 Steps to Improving Your Sexual Life

1. Discover the potential of the clitoris

The key to deliberately achieving orgasm is the clitoris (refer to Fig. 9 on page 114). Here are some guidelines to releasing the potential in the clitoris:

(a) During lovemaking there must be a reasonable amount of kissing, body stimulation and foreplay[1]. Then the wife should lie on her back and the husband should gently stimulate both the hood and the button of the clitoris with his fingers.

(b) Stimulate your wife best by rubbing the surface of the button and also by rubbing the hood up and down.

(c) The husband should also stimulate the area surrounding the clitoris.

(d) He may transfer some lubrication from his wife's vagina to her clitoris or use artificial lubrication if need be.

(e) As stimulation continues, the wife should concentrate on her arousal, turning herself, her mind and her emotions loose.

(f) The husband must remember that stimulating the clitoris with a dry finger, could be irritating and this may rather turn his wife off.

(g) The stimulation may vary from a gentle and delicate touch on

the button to firm pressure on the hood.

(h) Stimulation should be continuous and uninterrupted.

i) When the wife is aroused approaching an orgasm, she will begin to breathe a little faster, heavier and deeper.

j) If your wife approaches orgasm but seems to have difficulty moving into it simply continue this arousal procedure, eventually it will happen.

2. Become an attractive and an exciting wife

(How to attract and revive a husband who is not interested in sex)

If you are a proud queen or a lady who has “a high-and-lifted-up” opinion of yourself then please do not bother to read this section. This part is only possible if you walk in humility.

There are several ways in which a woman can attract and excite her husband. It takes humility and determination to do any of these things. However, a wife who really wants improvement in her sexual life will be prepared to do them. On the next page are a few suggestions.

(a) Dress scantily when you are alone at home with your husband or when you are both in the bedroom.

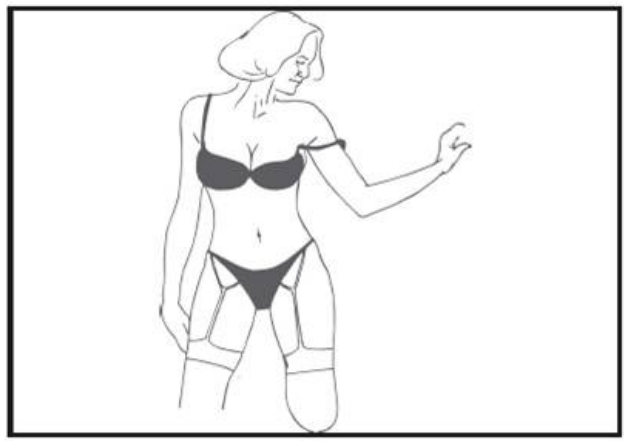

Fig.27

(b) Walk around naked in the bedroom when your husband is there. This will draw his attention to you.

(c) Lie in bed completely naked with your thighs parted to show your pubic hair and your buttocks.

(d) Lie in bed completely naked and cover a part of your body with a sheet.

(e) You could undress completely and get onto the bed. While naked try walking on your knees towards your husband and ask him some questions.

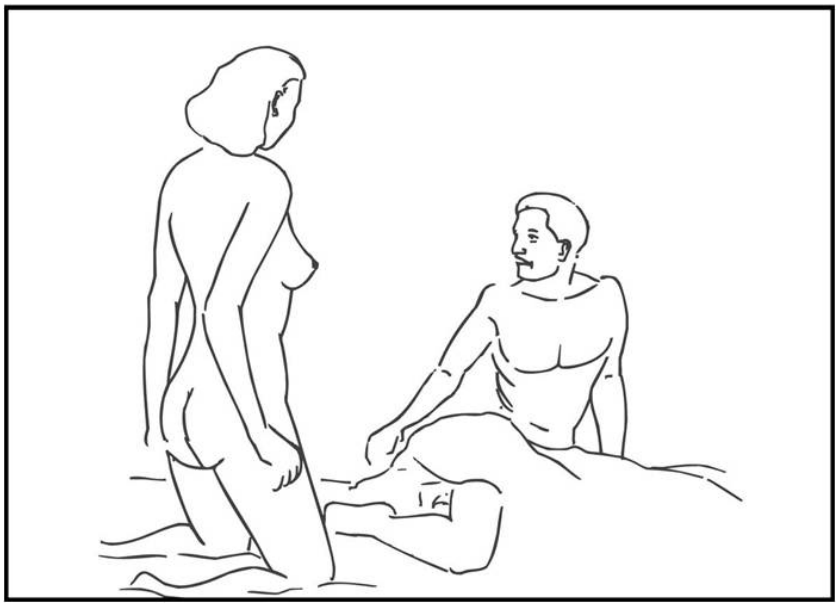

Fig. 28

(f) Try serving your husband's food dressed in a scanty top or short nightie. You could leave your blouse open or serve him with only a towel wrapped around you.

(g) When your husband is in the bathroom, you could go to the bathroom with only your underwear on and hold and hug him.

(h) Go behind your husband unexpectedly and grab his genitals gently and start fondling them.

(i) You could lie on the bed and fall asleep naked. This sight will catch your husband's attention when he walks into the room.

(j) Sit in a chair reading a book with your blouse and bra off and spread out your legs to show your pants.

(k) You could undress and ask your husband to give you a massage. Tell him you have a slight discomfort in your breasts, or back, or buttocks and ask him to massage them for a while.

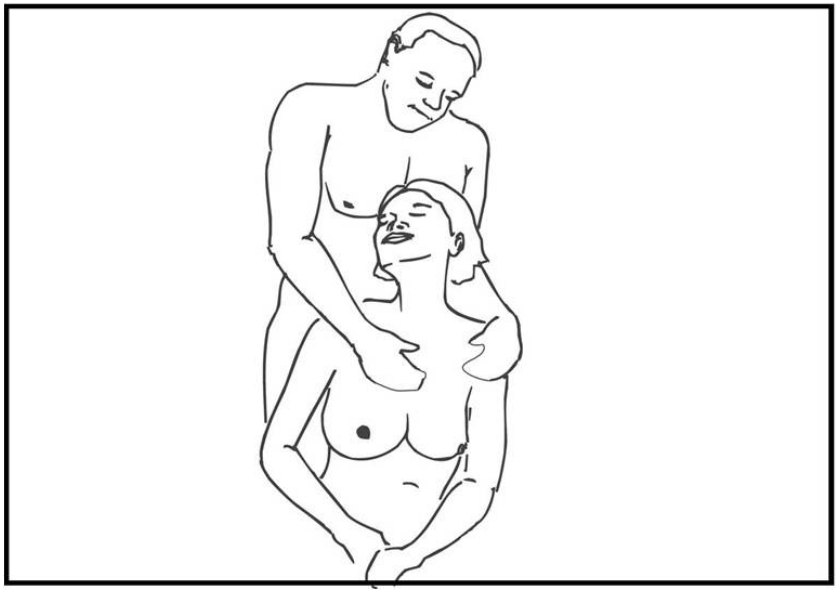

Fig 29

(l) After having a bath, make up, do your hair and stand in front of the mirror naked when your husband is present in the room. Act as though you are just dressing up. He is sure to notice your prolonged nakedness as you do your hair and other things.

Fig30

(m) You could undress completely and while your husband is watching TV, go and sit down next to him and put your head on his lap.

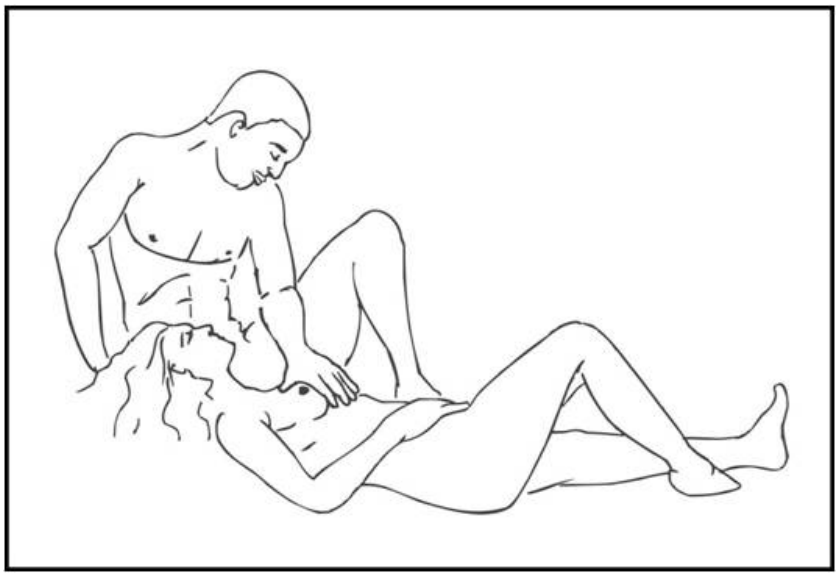

Fig 31

(n) Lie down naked on your face and spread out your legs so that he can see your buttocks and your vulva.

Fig 32

(o) After having your bath, sit on the bed naked and apply lotion to your body.

(p) Ask him to please help you shave your pubic hair as you cannot reach the hairs down below very easily.

(q) Have sex near a mirror so that you can see yourselves as you make love.

3. Try different positions for sex

Sex does not have to be restricted to conventional positions and places[2]. Sex in a marriage can be constantly revived if some variation is put into it. It takes humility and determination to experiment with some of these positions. Following are some examples of different positions in sex which will help improve your sexual life if you are adventurous enough to try them.

a. The Stimulating Basic Position

This is also a variation of the basic position. The woman raises her legs from the bed so that they rest on her partner's shoulders.

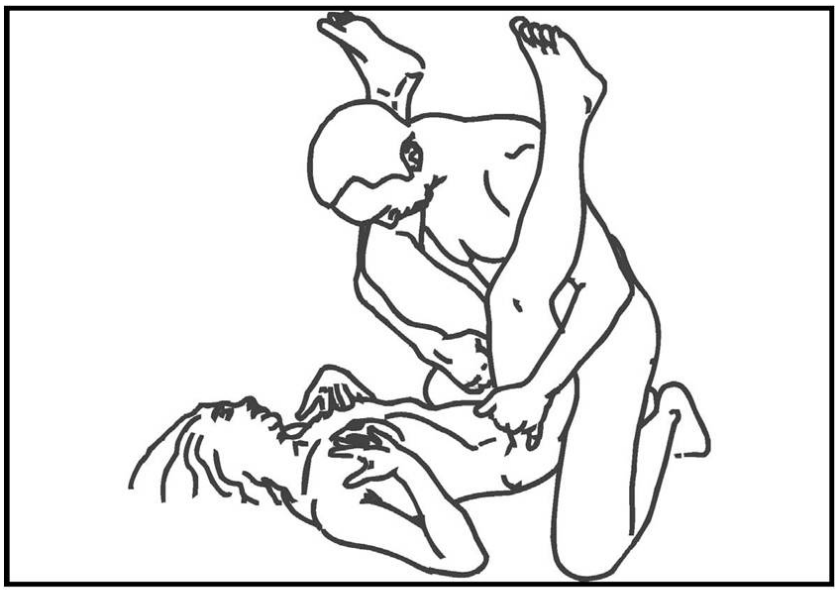

Fig 33: The Stimulating Basic Position

Advantages:

i. The man feels more and it is helpful for someone who cannot sustain an erection.

ii. The position allows the man to reach orgasm faster.

b. The Chair Position

The man sits with the woman straddled across his lap and facing him. She moves up and down on him supporting herself with her knees on the chair and her arms round his neck. This position is similar to the jockey position.

Advantages:

The variation of sitting naked on a chair can be exciting.

Fig.34: The Chair Posiiton

c. The Gliding Position

The woman lies on her back, spreads her legs, and her partner lies on top of her. His legs are along hers and his feet are along hers. The inner thighs and vulva form part of the canal for the penis.[3]

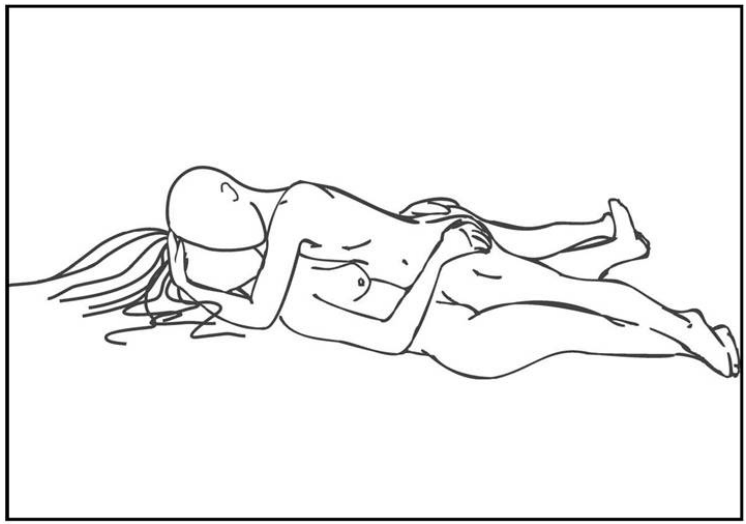

Fig. 35: The Gliding Position

Advantages

i. This is a good position for kissing.

ii. Allows total body contact.

d. The Front Standing Position

This position can be used when you are not at home or in a spacious place. Penetration is better when the man goes down a little and penetrates as he moves up. The woman can also lift up one leg and support it on a chair nearby.

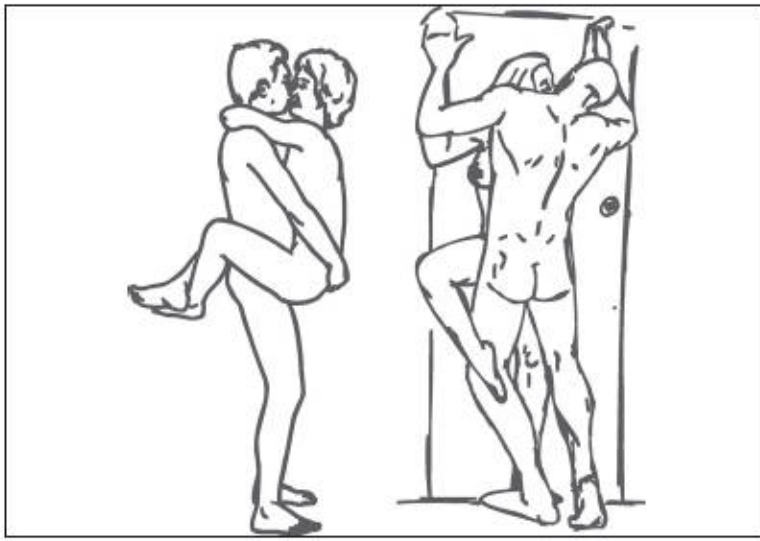

Fig. 36: The Front Sanding Position

Advantages:

i. Can be done in the bathroom.

ii. It is possible to kiss and gaze into each other's eyes.

Disadvantage:

This position can however be tiring.

e. The Back Standing Position

This position is similar to the front standing position. The man enters from the rear. Penetration is deeper when the woman bends down.

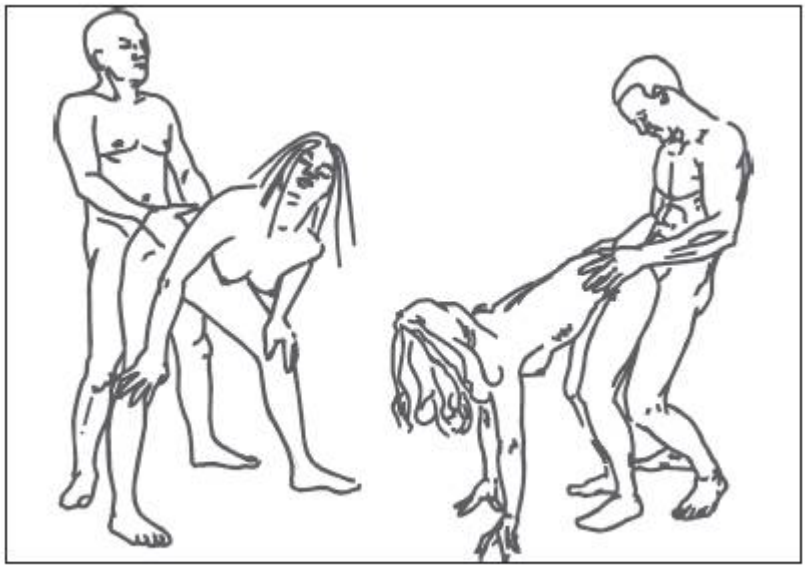

Fig.37: The Back Standing Position

Disadvantages:

i. Penetration is not so good.

ii. It is a tiring position.

f. The Tip-Off Position

Blood rushes to your head and creates euphoria. The vagina is tilted at an angle, which makes it easily accessible and therefore deeper penetration is achieved. You may need a firm bed for this position. You should place a pillow under your head to avoid bumping it on the floor.

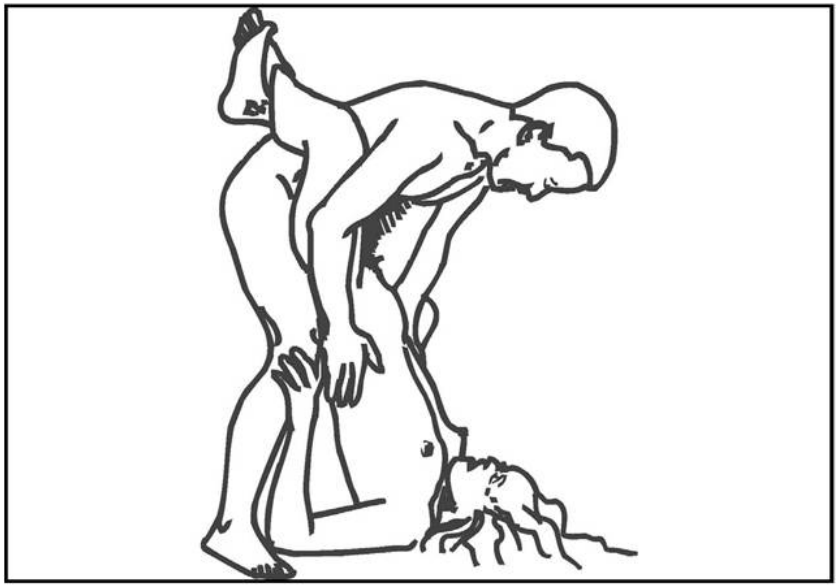

Fig. 38: The Tip-Off Position

g. The Sideways Position

The man has better access to the vagina in this position. The woman feels the penis entering the vagina at a different angle. Depending on how high the woman is able to raise her leg, the penis may be able to go in deeper. It is exciting to the man because he sees the vagina from a different point of view.[4]

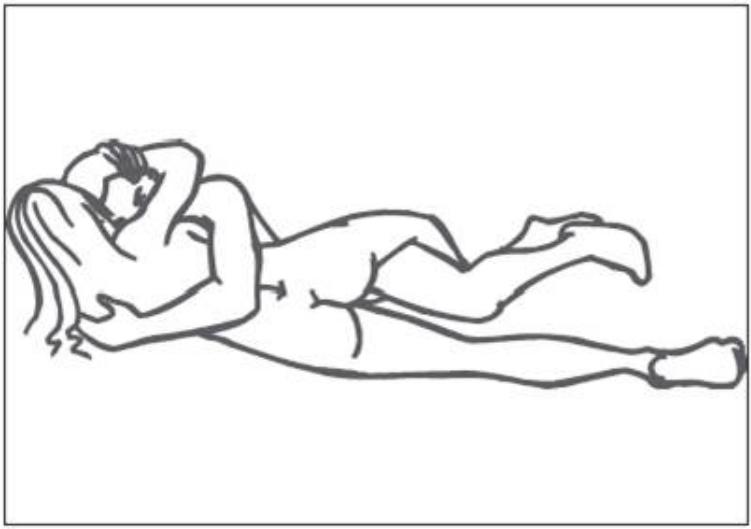

Fig. 39: The Sideways Position

h. The Twisted 'X' Position

Partners half-face each other. She wraps one leg around his waist and places the other leg between his. Consequently, one of his legs is between hers.

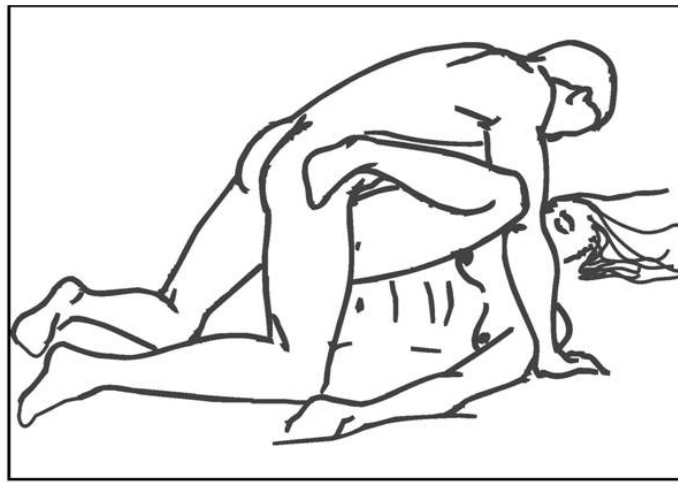

Fig. 40: The Twisted "X" Position

Fig. 40: The Twisted "X" Position

Advantages:

i. Allows better clitoral stimulation.

ii. The pelvis is tilted and lifted.

iii. Shaft of penis rubs the clitoris as it moves in and out.

i. The A-Four Position

Deep penetration can be achieved with the woman on all fours and her partner kneeling behind her. Rear entry positions like this one are ideal when both partners are in the mood for vigorous rather than tender lovemaking.

Advantages

i. It is exciting for the man to see the woman in this different position.

ii. Allows the man to see the vulva from a different view.

iii. Deeper penetration is achieved when woman puts her head

down on the pillow.

iv. The man can play with his wife's breasts as well as her buttocks.

v. The man can stand behind the woman if the bed is high.

Disadvantages

i. Some couples may initially find this position humiliating.

ii. It is not possible to kiss each other.

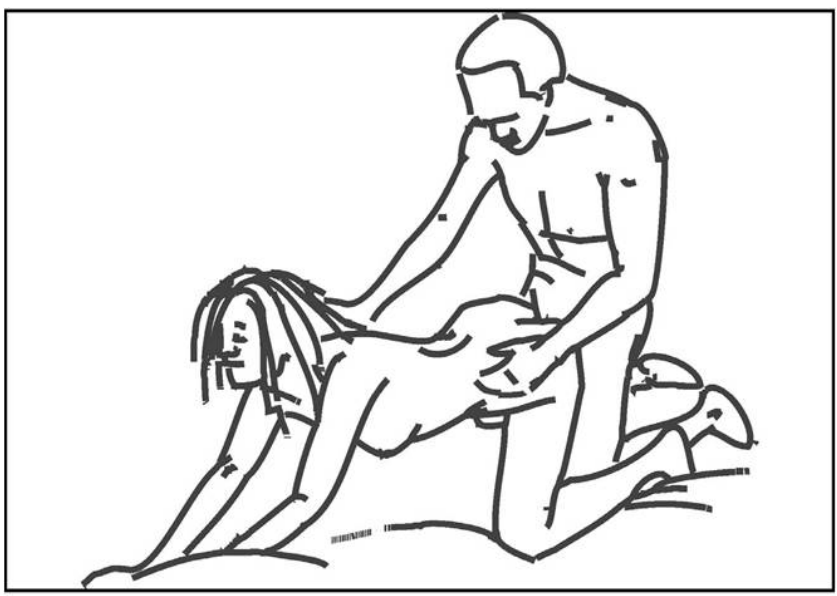

Fig. 41: The A-Four Position

4. Try having sex in different places

Sex must not only be limited to a couple's bedroom. Be creative as a couple and try having sex in other places in your home. Here are some suggestions of different places you can have sex. Husbands and wives should be innovative and add more spice to their sex life.

(a) In the sitting room when everyone is asleep.

(b) In the kitchen: on the floor or on the table.

(c) In the bathroom.

(d) On the bedroom floor.

(e) Whenever husband and wife have the opportunity to spend the night outside their usual bedroom, i.e. in a hotel, or in the open air, or in an enclosed space, they must take advantage of the change and have sexual excitement.

(f) In the car: the wife can unzip her husband whilst he is driving or she can take off her pants and give them to him. The car seat can be reclined to create more room.

5. Try oral sex (Refer to Chapter 37, Grey Areas on Sex)

6. Become a skilful husband

Sex is an art which can be learnt and improved. Below are some strategies which will be useful for improving your skill as a husband in sex.

Strategy 1

A skilful husband does not enter a dry vagina. Penetrating a dry vagina is uncomfortable and sometimes even painful for the wife. Before penetration, quickly use natural or artificial lubricant to wet the vagina.

Strategy 2

A husband who wants to delight his wife with his penis must know that he usually would last longer after one bout of sex. He will therefore be able to give a lot of pleasure to his wife if he has already had sex a few hours earlier.

Strategy 3

A skilful husband must position his penis inside the vagina in such way as to rub the clitoris with the shaft (e.g. in the twisted X position).

Strategy 4

A skilful husband must attempt to press the back wall of the vagina with the penis while thrusting since this creates greater sensitivity in the vagina. This is possible in the crossed position. The sensation created by applying pressure to only the side walls of the vagina are not so marked.

Strategy 5

The penis held in the hand can be used to rub and stimulate the vulva and clitoris. The penis should be used to rub the clitoris gently in a manner which is similar to painting with a paint brush.

Strategy 6

The penis can be made skilful by using it from different positions, e.g. in the crossed or twisted positions.

7. Become a skilful wife

Use your mind and your vagina as active sex tools and refuse to become a dull and unexciting wife.

The mind is probably the largest sex organ and therefore to become a skilful wife decide in your mind to enjoy sex. When the mind is in the flow you will find sex extremely enjoyable. The skilful wife must know that her vagina can be used to achieve orgasm, even without directly stimulating the clitoris. This can be possible if the woman applies these guidelines:

(a) Decide that, “I am going to enjoy sex.” The mind is the most important tool to achieving this.

(b) Decide that I will use my vagina to enjoy sex.

(c) Instead of waiting just to receive the penis, raise your buttocks to meet and intercept the “available” penis.

(d) Decide that, “My vagina will not let this penis go until I’m blessed.”

(e) Use your vaginal muscles to “milk” the penis at intervals. Slowly tighten your vaginal muscles as described in the pelvic floor

exercises.

(f) Thrusting movements of the husband and the wife should be complementary. The wife should raise her hips up to take in the penis as it thrusts inwards.

(g) The more vigorous and energetic you are in taking in the penis the more easily you achieve orgasm.

8. Do vaginal exercises

Vaginal exercises focus on tightening the muscles surrounding the vagina. With childbirth and age the vaginal muscles are weakened and the vagina may feel patulous.[5]

Vaginal exercises are therefore important because:

(a) These exercises tighten the vagina and prevent the penis from being loose and floating freely in the vagina.

(b) Exercising the vaginal muscles will make your husband experience a better sensation in the vagina.

(c) The tightening of the vagina also makes the woman experience a better sensation when the penis is in the vagina.

(d) These exercises prevent the womb from prolapsing (that is gradually coming lower and out of the vagina which is common in older women and women with many children).

(e) Vaginal exercises also prevent you from losing control of urinination as you grow older.

(f) These exercises will enable you enjoy sex much more.[6]

How to Perform Vaginal Exercises

When you are passing urine, squeeze yourself to stop the flow of urine for 2-3 seconds. Repeat this exercise of stopping urine from flowing and starting the flow until the bladder is empty. Go through this any time you are passing urine. In order for these exercises to be effective, they must be done at least 40 times in a day.

You should therefore go through these exercises:

i. When you are passing urine.

ii. When you are bathing in the morning and evening.

iii. When having sex.

iv. With more experience you can do it all day (in church, at home, at work).[7]

Do not allow your vagina to become so wide and lax that your husband will not have much excitement during sex and will therefore desire to have someone who is younger and tighter.

Chapter 45

Sex at an Older Age

With time, as husbands and wives grow older their sex life invariably also changes. It is not acceptable to assume that sexual excitement must die or reduce as a couple grows. Sexual excitement is rather experienced and expressed differently with age. Let us take a look at what sex means to different ages.

Sex in the 30's

When in their 30's women gain more sexual confidence and begin to take initiative during lovemaking. Many are not as passive as they were when younger. Women in their 30's are more expressive about their sexual needs and their need for orgasm. Medical science attributes this new aggressiveness to hormonal changes in the woman—with increased testosterone, she becomes more confident and interested in orgasm. Some men may find this sudden change in their previously compliant wives rather frightening; others will welcome her initiative and respond positively. The men too, are now more concerned about what brings satisfaction to their partners. Men in their 30's, unlike the women, experience a minor reduction in DHEA (a natural steroid) and testosterone levels.

Sex in the 40's

Usually, as women approach the end of their childbearing years at the age of forty, they often find more opportunity to focus on themselves, and therefore blossom. This is reflected in a more fulfilling sex life. Both men and women in their 40s have attained some measure of emotional maturity and have overcome sexual inadequacies. They find that they are more compatible and less concerned about their performance in bed.

Each appreciates what the other likes, and sex is better. The familiarity of the long-term relationship may result in greater intimacy and less inhibition when experimenting with lovemaking

techniques. On the other hand, familiarity may lead to boredom. It is essential that the couple work at creating a sense of newness by looking for ways and opportunities to enhance their sexual experience together. A trip away from home and the children is often stimulating.

Sex in the 50's

A lot of men are anxious about their sexual life when approaching their 50's, fearing that sex will not be as exciting as it was in their youth. While it is true that erections are usually less frequent, the advantage is that the erections that older men do get will last longer and they will be find sex satisfying. Since the compulsion to ejaculate is significantly reduced, there is abundant time for foreplay, and the expression of warmth and intimacy by partners. Women need to learn though that their fifty-something-year-old husband may now be satisfied without ejaculating, and may no longer be aroused merely by sight. Indeed, medical research has proven that partners in their 50s are often more in step with each other emotionally and sexually, particularly if they are in good health and are not taking medication that weakens their sex drive.

Sex in the 60's

Interestingly, couples in their sixties and after may actually find their sexual experience most gratifying, even though sex is infrequent. Women in this age group have recurrent orgasms, and the men when strong physically, may be quite virile.[1]

From the above, it is apparent that the potential for a fulfilling sex life is available to couples at any age—they ought to settle for nothing less!

The Janus Report noted that those aged 70 and over who were having sex said it was at least as gratifying as ever. Some said it was at its best. No wonder researchers couldn't find a single study subject under the age of 90 who wasn't having sex when he or she was interested and had a partner.[2]

SECTION 13

PREGNANCY, LABOUR AND CHILDCARE

Chapter 46

How to Know You Are Pregnant

Some women are able to tell when they are pregnant. Small changes in their bodies and feelings of extreme tiredness or nausea during the very early stages alert them to the fact that they have conceived. Other women experience no noticeable changes and may not even know they are pregnant.

First Signs

What You May Notice

(a) You will miss your period. This is the most obvious sign of pregnancy but occasionally a very light and scanty period may occur, which can be confusing. This happens because the normal female hormonal cycle continues despite the presence of pregnancy hormones.

(b) Your breasts may become tender and increase in size. The nipple area may also become more pronounced.

(c) Some women suffer from morning sickness (which may make them throw up); others have feelings of nausea, which last all day. This can begin very early during the pregnancy, but usually starts around six weeks and improves after about twelve to fourteen weeks of pregnancy.

(d) There may also be the need to urinate frequently. This is caused by pressure from the developing baby, because the uterus sits just above the bladder. You may need to awake from sleep at night to urinate, or find yourself doing so frequently during the day. This usually reduces as the baby grows and the uterus moves off the bladder.[1]

How You May Feel

(a) Your taste for food may change. Your favourite foods may no longer appeal to you, and you may find yourself wanting to eat food that you normally will not go for. You may now crave for food with sharp fruity or chalky tastes.

(b) Some women find they have a metallic taste in their mouths.

(c) You may feel tired all the time; to the point of needing to sleep during the day as well as in the evening and at night.

(d) The smell of certain things you normally do not react to may put you off e.g. perfumes, onions, etc.

How to Confirm You Are Pregnant

(a) The surest sign of pregnancy is when you continue to miss your period. Pregnancy is not the only reason for periods to be absent, but if you have been trying to have a baby, then it is the most likely.[2]

(b) You can confirm you are pregnant by doing a pregnancy test: you can use a home pregnancy test kit (which you can buy from any pharmacy shop) or, to be very sure, have the test done at a proper laboratory. Most tests measure the level of pregnancy hormones in your urine, and the best sample of urine to use for the test is early morning urine which is most concentrated.

How to Calculate Your Expected Day of Delivery (EDD)

Pregnancy usually lasts forty weeks, which is slightly more than 9 months. For a rough calculation of your EDD, add nine months and one week to the first day of your last period. E.g. If the first day of your last period was 1st January, then you are likely to be due around the 8th of October.

Chapter 47

What Happens During Forty Weeks of Pregnancy

The First Stage (Weeks 0 – 12)

Pregnancy is divided into three phases or stages. Much of the hard work of growing a baby takes place during the first stage which is from conception until about twelve weeks.

(a) The egg is released from the ovary in the middle of the menstrual cycle (usually at around day fourteen for a regular cycle). The sperms swim towards the egg, and surround it in the outer part of one of the fallopian tubes.

(b) Once one sperm has penetrated the egg, the egg's surface changes to prevent other sperms from getting through, and the fertilized egg journeys on down the tube and attaches itself to the lining of the uterus.

(c) You may begin to notice slight changes, perhaps in your sense of taste, some breast tenderness, or feelings of nausea sometimes accompanied by throwing up.

(d) From week 5 to 8, the baby's main organs begin to grow and the nervous system develops. The heart begins to beat at about six weeks and the limbs start developing. The face also begins to develop and the mouth and tongue become visible.

(e) From this point, many women now notice they are pregnant. Your breasts may start to grow bigger, and you may feel tired and nauseous and go off certain foods.

(f) From week 9 to 12, the embryo begins to look more like a baby now and is technically referred to as a foetus. During this period, all the major organs such as the lungs, kidneys and liver are formed. The skeleton begins to develop too. The ears and nose can be recognized, and the eyes form, but are still closed. Fingers and toes

are growing, and the baby even has the beginnings of external genital organs. You may discover that the feelings of nausea begin to reduce at this stage.

The Second Stage (Weeks 13 – 28)

This is the most comfortable stage of pregnancy. Sickness and tiredness reduce extremely, your body begins to grow and becomes quite rounded.

(a) From week 13 to 18, the baby now looks like a baby, but is very tiny. All major organs begin to work, including the kidneys. Your baby makes breathing-like movements. This is not real breathing as the lungs will not expand and work until after he is born.

(b) His fingernails and toenails form, and eyebrows and eyelashes begin to grow. He moves around, and many mothers notice the first foetal movements at around eighteen weeks. The feeling is like butterflies or bubbles in the stomach.

(c) During week 19 to 24, the baby begins growing hair on his head. There is still more fluid than baby, and he can easily turn around inside you. The movements become more noticeable and your husband may be able to feel them if he places his hand on the bare skin of your stomach.

(d) By week 25 to 28, the pregnant mother can detect definite periods of rest and activity. Some babies seem to kick and move around at the same time each day, and they then have set times when they keep still, and possibly are asleep.

(e) His eyes open, and he may respond to the small amounts of light coming through the stretched abdominal muscles. He can suck his thumb, and may even get hiccups. This is a strange sensation for the mother, almost as if he were giving little regular kicks in the same place.

The Third and Final Stage (Weeks 29 – 40)

Reaching thirty weeks often feels like the last lap of a marathon. You may need to take your maternity leave from work at this stage,

as you become bigger and need to rest more often. This though, varies from woman to woman. Some women are still full of energy, and quite happy working and keeping active. Others need to slow down, and begin to focus their attention on the baby.

(a) At week 29 to 32, the baby becomes well developed. He can swallow, hear, suck his thumb, recognize your voice, and, if he were born now, would have a good chance of survival. However, the best place for him over the next few weeks is undoubtedly inside you, where he is safe, secure and continues to grow.

(b) You may notice that the baby's movements change as he gets bigger. He has less room to move around now, but you may be able to identify which is a foot kicking and which is an elbow poking.

(c) At week 33 to 36, the baby continues to put on weight. He will probably settle into the head-down position and gradually move down. This happens as the lower part of the uterus softens for labour, and the baby fits into the top section of the pelvis.

(d) From week 37 to 40, the baby, who is now plump and strong is ready to be born. He will be able to breathe and suck well from birth. He could arrive two weeks before or two weeks after your due date, so it is important to plan what to do if you go overdue. You will probably find that you need to rest each day and conserve your energies for the hard work of labour.[1]

Chapter 48

Eight Common Problems in Pregnancy

Pregnancy is straightforward for the majority of women, but occasionally problems occur. The aim of antenatal care is to identify such problems early, and hopefully deal with them. Below are some of the common problems associated with pregnancies.[1]

1. Miscarriage

Most miscarriages occur in the first three months of pregnancy and usually begin with vaginal bleeding, followed by pain low down in the abdomen. It is important to contact your doctor if you experience any vaginal bleeding. You may have to go into hospital for a D and C (dilation and curettage) to ensure that any remnants of placenta have been removed, and in order to avoid further bleeding and possible infection.

Losing your baby, even early in pregnancy, can be very upsetting. Many women feel a deep sense of loss and blame the miscarriage on something they have done, but it is the body's natural way of dealing with a problem that cannot be solved, so try not to feel guilty.

In some cases of threatened miscarriage, by lying down and resting for a few days the pregnancy stabilizes and continues normally.

2. Ectopic Pregnancy

This is a condition in which the fertilized egg implants and begins to grow outside the uterus, usually in one of the fallopian tubes. As it grows, the tube begins to stretch, causing a sharp pain on one side of the abdomen. Other symptoms include vaginal bleeding and feelings of faintness or dizziness. If you have these symptoms, it is important to contact your doctor immediately. The pregnancy must be terminated, and usually the fallopian tube has to be removed.[2]

3. Incompetent Cervix

Usually the cervix (neck of the womb) stays tightly closed until labour begins, but in some women, the cervix is weak and cannot support the growing baby and this can be the cause of a later miscarriage, after the third month of pregnancy. If this is discovered before you miscarry, the cervix can be held close with a stitch, which is put in place during a minor operation. The stitch is then removed, usually about a couple of weeks before the baby is due, so that the labour may progress normally.[3]

4. Pre-Eclampsia

One out of every ten mothers suffers from symptoms of pre-eclampsia during late pregnancy. The symptoms are raised blood pressure, swelling of the hands and feet, and the presence of protein in the urine. Regular antenatal checks ensure that these symptoms are detected early and dealt with. For example, if your blood pressure is very high, bed-rest is often suggested or you may be admitted to hospital for observation. In some cases, labour may have to be induced, and the baby may have to be delivered by caesarean section.[4]

5. Rhesus Factor Problems

If a rhesus negative mother has a rhesus positive first baby, it can activate her body defense mechanisms for dealing with foreign bodies. This means that in a subsequent pregnancy, her antibodies may damage a rhesus positive baby's blood cells. It is usual to check the blood group of a baby born to a rhesus negative mother and if necessary, give the mother an injection to prevent problems arising with future pregnancies.

6. Low-Lying Placenta

Usually, the placenta embeds itself high up on the wall of the uterus. Occasionally, it fixes itself low down and may cover the cervix. Often the first sign is bleeding, perhaps at about twenty-eight weeks. Sometimes a low-lying placenta is picked up by an ultrasound scan early on, but the condition may correct itself as the uterus grows. If it remains very low, or covers the cervix, a

caesarean section will be necessary.[5]

7. Health Problems

An existing health problem, such as diabetes, epilepsy or asthma, can generate problems during pregnancy. Discuss your condition with your doctor before becoming pregnant, as it is likely that you will need extra care and attention during pregnancy, and possibly in labour.

8. Stillbirth

It is not very common now for a baby to die at around the time of birth. This is because routine antenatal care picks up most problems, especially those related to development abnormalities or failure of the placenta. However, some babies do die before they are born, sometimes due to high blood pressure, bleeding from the placenta or because of a pre-existing medical problem in the mother.

If tragically, the baby has died in the womb, your doctor will explain to you what has happened and talk about the necessity of inducing labour. Once the baby is born, you may be asked if you want to see and hold her. Many parents find this hard at the time, but in fact it can help if you have a chance to say both hello and goodbye to your baby.[6]

Chapter 49

Normal Life in Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a natural changing point in a woman's life. Women vary as to how they feel during this stage. Some women blossom and their growing roundness suits them. Others find tiredness and sickness affect the joy of the first few months, and they feel large and cumbersome from the middle of pregnancy onwards. For most women, there are ups and downs during pregnancy: times when they are glad that they are pregnant and enjoy the process, and times when they probably wish it could be over more quickly and they could feel like their old selves again. Whichever case it is, a certain level of normal life can and should continue.[1]

1. Church Life

It is important to understand that pregnancy is not a sickness and so the mind should be properly tuned to accept that fact, and to flow with it. God and church should still play a major role in your life during pregnancy.

(a) Maintain your closeness to God by having regular quiet times. A good spiritual tune-up can help ensure confidence and trust in God throughout the pregnancy.

(b) Attend church regularly and participate in all activities normally, unless your doctor advises otherwise. Quite a few women use pregnancy as a major reason to excuse themselves from ordinary Christian activities and end up backsliding during pregnancy. After delivery, they never recover from their spiritual dullness.

(c) If you are a member of the choir, you should attend rehearsals and sing with the group. It will be a good example for others to learn from. We see a wonderful example of a heavily pregnant woman singing with the great, anointed worship leader, Ron Kenoly in his "Lift Him Up" video (she sang a solo for the song, "Hallowed

be Thy Name").

2. Sex in Pregnancy

(a) Pregnancy is a time when physical closeness can become very fulfilling. The excitement both partners feel can be expressed sexually, adding to the richness of their relationship.

(b) Many women allow the physical discomforts associated with their pregnancy to hamper their sex life, and they always claim that sex is not too enjoyable. It is important to establish that pregnancy is not a sickness; it is a stage of life and therefore, the sexual life of the couple should not be made to suffer unduly.

(c) Some men find that a partner's pregnancy enhances her attractiveness, and many women feel particularly good about their bodies at this time. Indeed, the pelvic congestion that occurs as the baby grows makes some women more quickly aroused.

(d) Many couples are concerned about whether sex during pregnancy can harm the developing baby. For most pregnancies, most of the time, there is absolutely no need to worry, but there are some circumstances in which you may be advised not to have full sex. If you have a previous history of miscarriage, or had a threatened miscarriage of this pregnancy, doctors advise against having sex at the time your period would normally have been due. Also, any woman with a very low-lying placenta is usually advised to avoid sex. If you have any concerns at all about sex, do discuss them with your doctor.

(e) In a normal pregnancy, sexual intercourse is not a problem, though as the stomach grows bigger, the couple needs to avoid positions with the man on top.

(f) Sexual life can continue right through to the last stages of the pregnancy[2]. Some couples fear that full intercourse later on in pregnancy, can harm the baby or break the waters but this is really not the case. In late pregnancy, sex may cause contractions to occur. These are "practice" contractions, and some women experience them throughout the last few weeks of pregnancy. Others hardly feel them. Orgasm can set them off, but they usually

fade away after a few minutes.

(g) For many couples, pregnancy provides the opportunity to develop and enhance their sex life to include more touching, stroking, cuddling and massage. Many of these skills can induce deep relaxation and satisfaction.

(h) Sex can be a pleasant, natural way to start labour when the pregnancy is overdue. A woman's body produces hormones during lovemaking which can help nudge her into labour, and male semen contains substances called prostaglandins which can help start contractions. It will only do this, however, if the mother and the baby are ready for labour.

(i) Even if couples don't feel inclined to make love, simply stroking, massaging, touching and hugging can have the same effect and give a lot of joy.[3]

3. Working During Pregnancy

Normal working life can go on during pregnancy, until the later stages when the expectant mother can proceed on maternity leave. It is advisable to modify the way you work in order to make things more comfortable, for instance by sitting instead of standing, or getting a more comfortable chair with your back supported by cushions[4]. If you are unwell during pregnancy or there are complications, your doctor should give you an excuse duty form.

4. Normal Antenatal Care

Antenatal care is a very important aspect of pregnancy[5]. Pregnancy is a rather complex process during which problems could arise at any point in time.

Antenatal care is therefore very important for both mother and baby for the following reasons:

(a) Routine monitoring of your weight, blood pressure, blood cell indices (haemoglobin, white cell count, etc).

(b) Medical examinations such as ultrasound scan, glucose tolerance test, and sickling test are carried out to assess the well-being of the

baby and to detect risk factors such as diabetes and sickle cell disease.

(c) Certain complications of pregnancy such as pre-eclampsia (increased blood pressure during pregnancy which could lead to convulsions) could be detected during antenatal care.

(d) Counselling in the hospital setting is carried out by nurses. This offers you the opportunity to understand pregnancy-related issues such as general care of the body, breastfeeding, nutrition and other health topics.

A minimum of nine visits to the antenatal clinic is considered adequate. This normally starts around the third month when basic tests are done. Monthly visits are carried out until the 36th week and subsequently every week until labour.[6]

Chapter 50

How to Look after Yourself during Pregnancy

As we have already stated, pregnancy is a natural state, not an illness. However, you may need to make some adjustments to your lifestyle.[1]

Adjustments During Pregnancy

1. Sleeping

Sometimes discomforts of pregnancy such as heartburn or cramp can keep you awake at night or cause you to go to the toilet often. Develop a regular relaxation routine that can help you sleep better. A bath, a hot milky drink and reading your Bible or Christian literaturel can help you relax and sleep. You need to experiment with sleeping positions to discover the most comfortable one.

2. Vaginal Discharge

You may find you have an increased vaginal discharge during pregnancy. This is perfectly normal. However, if it becomes more profuse or discoloured or you start to itch, it may signal an infection such as thrush. Do check this with your doctor.

3. Weight Gain

There is a tendency to put on weight during pregnancy. The weight gain can vary from 7 to18kgs (15-40lb). It is very important to eat a healthy and balanced diet when you are pregnant. Women who have a very poor diet in pregnancy and gain little weight tend to have very small babies. On the other hand, women who overeat and put on a great deal of weight may be subjecting their bodies to great strain. A good balance should be struck.

4. Breasts

The breasts are likely to increase in size, and some women find they

also develop stretch marks here. Use a moisturizing cream and always wear a good supportive bra. It's worth checking the fit at intervals during pregnancy, since you may need to move up through the sizes as you grow. Women with smaller breasts are likely to be able to breastfeed, but if you have very flat or inverted nipples it can make it difficult for a baby to fix on well. However, a baby's sucking is a very effective mechanism for pulling out an inverted nipple, so even if yours are flat or inverted at the start, you will still be able to feed your baby.

Looking Good

1. Choosing Clothes

It is important to choose the right style of clothes when you are pregnant so you don't look too full. What you wear will depend on the occasion and what you are most comfortable in. Scarves or bright jewellery at the neck help to draw attention to your face and away from your expanding figure.1

2. Shoes

Flat comfortable shoes are recommended for pregnant mothers. Try to avoid standing for long periods. Sit with your feet raised when you can and avoid sitting with crossed legs. Avoid high heels at all cost!

3. Hair and Make-Up

Many women find that their face shape changes during pregnancy. You may want to alter your style of make-up, or have your hair cut into a new style, especially if your face seems rounder. Hair can be quite fragile in pregnancy, and special care should be taken so you don't lose your hair.

4. Skin Care

Your skin may change too. Sometimes, it becomes very dry in pregnancy and needs an extra-rich moisturizer, but often in the middle months skin and hair seem to blossom. Occasionally women develop a brownish marking on the face, or a brown line down the

middle of the stomach from about the third month. These are caused by pregnancy hormones and usually fade after the baby is born. You can try covering them with a good foundation cream. It is also best to avoid strong sunlight as this can make the pigmentation worse.

Exercise During Pregnancy

Now that you are pregnant, you may be wondering how safe it is to take up exercise[2]. Growing and carrying a baby around inside you for nine months is physically hard work. Physical fitness brings with it many advantages and you may want to take a look at your lifestyle and see whether there are some changes you could make so that you feel fitter.

Walking is a very good form of physical activity and, provided it is brisk enough and done for a reasonable time, it can really help keep your heart and lungs healthy. Exercise regularly two or three times a week. This is much safer and more effective than doing it frequently.

You can also exercise the pelvic floor muscles. These muscles form the floor of the bony pelvis and supports the internal organs. During birth they get stretched and need exercise to make them strong again. It is good to exercise them during the pregnancy because this will make it easier for you to exercise them after birth. Any weakness to these muscles may cause leakage of urine when you cough or sneeze.

To exercise the pelvic floor muscles, imagine you are desperate to empty your bladder but when you get to the washroom, it is occupied. Tighten up around the front passage as if to stop yourself leaking. Keep breathing, hold for a count of four, and then release. Do it as often as you can during the day.

Chapter 51

Four Minor Problems to Expect during Pregnancy

1. Backache

During pregnancy, your body produces hormones, which soften the ligaments joining the sections of the pelvis. This is to allow the pelvis to open slightly and make more space for the baby.

Unfortunately, it can also cause backache. Good posture and a reasonable amount of exercise will help. If backache is a major problem, you should discuss it with your doctor.

2. Breathlessness

The growing baby takes up quite a lot of space inside you, and many women find that at some stage they feel breathless. It usually occurs when your stomach is fairly elevated and improves once the baby settles down into the pelvis, often at around thirty-six weeks. Breathlessness can be eased if you sleep propped up on several pillows. If the breathlessness is prolonged, however, you should talk to your doctor.

3. Constipation

This is a common problem in pregnancy. It can be made worse by some types of iron pills. If your doctor has prescribed iron pills, do discuss this with him or her. It may be possible to change the type of iron supplements. A proper diet, fluids and exercise all help relieve constipation. Make sure you eat foods such as cereals, bread, fresh fruits and vegetables every day. Drink plenty of water or fruit juices.

4. Lower Abdominal Pain

This is a normal complaint in pregnancy due to the increasing weight and positioning of the baby. The lower abdominal muscles

and pelvic bones bear a lot of weight and the strain then causes lower abdominal pain (LAP).

Lower abdominal pain at the onset of pregnancy (around the 5th to 10th week) could also be a result of ectopic pregnancy which may be bleeding, or an intrauterine pregnancy which is attempting to abort.

Infections could also cause LAP. An immediate visit to the hospital is strongly advised.

Towards the end of pregnancy, lower abdominal pain could also signify among other things early labour or the onset of bleeding when the placenta is low-lying. Immediate medical attention must be sought.[1]

Chapter 52

Labour

Preparation for Labour

It is helpful to prepare for the birth well in advance so that later on, you can slow down and take life more easily. Make a list of things you may need in labour, pack a small case for your stay in the hospital and make sure you also stock up on essential items for your return home. Buy a few basics for the baby, like nappies, and a few baby clothes, but don't rush out and buy a complete wardrobe until after it is born and you know exactly what you need.

1. Labour Bag

Have a small bag of things you may need while in labour. You may find some of the following items useful:

(a) A nightdress or t-shirt to wear while in labour. Something old and soft will be more comfortable than a hospital gown, which can be stiff or starchy.

(b) Face towel. This can be really useful for moistening your face and lips as labour progresses and you need to take shallow breaths through your mouth.

(c) Toothbrush and toothpaste.

(d) An extra nightdress, towels and panties to wear after the baby is born. Usually you can have a shower before being moved to the post-natal ward, so keep your bathing kit handy too.

2. Atmosphere Creator and Tapes

An "atmosphere creator" is a term we use for a portable sound system or player. Playing cool, soothing Christian music or preaching messages can help you relax and feel confident that God is going to see you through. Do not let other people affect your

atmosphere with worldly music and negative thoughts; create your own Holy Spirit-saturated environment!

3. Bible and Christian Literature

Carry your Bible and other Christian books along. These will also help you to relax.

Labour and Birth

Many women worry about how they will know when they start labour. For many of them, there is a long period when they simply are not sure as they may have odd aches and niggles, or feel "different" somehow, but do not really have proper contractions. This is often referred to as the pre-labour phase.

How to Know You Are in Labour

The following signs are likely indications that you are in the early stages of labour:

(a) Low backache, which is caused by the baby settling down into the pelvis.

(b) A sudden desire to get everything finished and ready for the baby.

(c) Uncomfortable feeling low down at the front. This may be caused by the cervix becoming soft, ripe and ready for commencement of labour.

(d) Sporadic contractions that last a few hours then fade away. These could be practice contractions, or may result from the ripening of the cervix.

(e) Diarrhoea, or a frequent need to empty your bowels.

(f) The cervix is sealed with a soft mucus plug that helps prevent infection. As the cervix begins to soften and thin this plug often comes away as a "show". It is a soft clear jelly, but may be streaked with blood from the fine blood vessels that are stretched by the thinning cervix.

How to Know When to Go to the Hospital

You can stay at home during the first half of labour and spend a little time getting used to the feelings and dealing with the contractions by relaxing, breathing, massaging and so on. However, some situations require medical intervention or advice and you should go to the hospital if:

(a) Your waters break. If you notice a sudden gush of water or a constant steady trickle, the bag of waters surrounding the baby has probably broken. This does not usually happen until you are clearly in labour, but it can occur before labour starts. It is possible (though very rare) that the umbilical cord could become compressed once the waters have broken, and so most hospitals and midwives like to check the baby's heartbeat regularly afterwards. Some units also believe that the baby is more at risk from infection once the waters have gone and therefore prefer to induce labour.

(b) You begin to bleed. This could simply be the "show" coming away, but bleeding in pregnancy should always be checked.

(c) Contractions are coming every ten minutes, or less, and the pain is becoming too much to bear.

(d) You think the baby is not moving very much. In later pregnancy the baby often settles down and kicks less than in the middle months. If you feel the baby is quieter than usual, it is worth consulting your doctor.[1]

Chapter 53

Three Stages of Labour

First Stage (Long, Painful, Contraction Stage)

This is the longest stage of labour, and can last between six to eighteen hours. During this time, the neck of the womb or cervix opens up to make space for the baby to pass through. Initially, the cervix is like a firm muscular tube which is tightly closed. As labour continues, it becomes soft and thin, and begins to open out. Each contraction during the first stage helps to open up the cervix so that eventually, it becomes fully dilated and the baby can be born. Therefore, each contraction brings you one step closer to the moment when at long last you will be able to hold your baby in your arms.

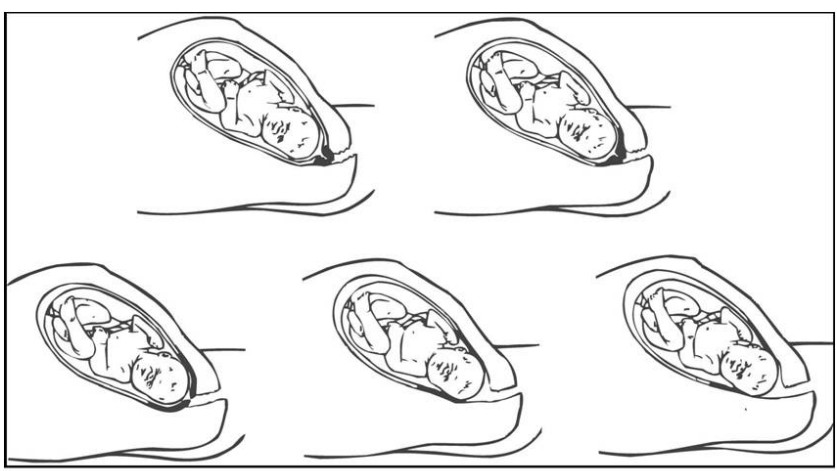

Fig. 42: Stages of Labour

How You May Feel during Contractions

Contractions are muscular pulling sensations that come in waves. You can feel the beginning of each contraction, and the feeling gets stronger and reaches a peak before fading away. There is then a

rest, quite often a long one, before the next contractions. As labour progresses, contractions become longer, stronger and are now closer together. To begin with, you may feel a contraction every ten or fifteen minutes that lasts about thirty seconds. This may then step up to every five minutes, with contractions lasting between fifty to sixty seconds. In the last hour or so of labour, you may have contractions that come every three minutes and last for about a minute.

You may feel the contractions mostly as backache that gets stronger and intensifies as labour progresses. Occasionally, the contractions may lead to “referred pain” in the legs or thighs, but often the strong pulling sensations are felt low down, just behind the pubic hair, which is where the cervix is. Many women say that in the first part of labour, the contractions feel like very bad menstrual pains.

How to Help Yourself When You Are in Labour

It is important to know how to help yourself during this stage of labour. Being frightened only makes you feel more tense. This makes you experience more pain which results in more fear. It is important to understand what is going on in your body so you can help yourself.

Relaxation

Learning to relax while you are in labour is essential. Not only will this bring down the intensity of pain, it also means that you can save your energy for the hard work of pushing out the baby instead of wasting it fighting against your body. Do the things you usually do when you are tired or in pain e.g. take a leisurely bath, listen to soothing Christian music, let your husband hold you, etc.

Position

Holding yourself upright and moving around can make the contractions less difficult to bear and at the same time make them more effective. You can try sitting on a chair (facing the chair back), with a couple of pillows against the chair back, so you can rest your arms and head on them. Leaning forward helps a lot, because it takes some of your weight on your arms. Try leaning on

a table or on the hospital bed. If you have backaches, kneeling on all fours can help greatly. This may be because the baby's spine is lying alongside your spine, and lying in bed can feel very uncomfortable. Roll over on to all fours, so that the baby's weight drops off your spine thereby reducing the feeling of pressure.

Pain-Relief Options

There are a number of ways you can relieve pain during labour. The pain of labour varies considerably from woman-to-woman and from labour-to-labour.

The most effective way of pain relief is by having an epidural. This is to have an injection around the spine area. It usually removes all feelings of pain while leaving the woman clear headed and able to cope. If contractions are coming thick and fast, it is advisable not to have an epidural because like many other injections, it is best given when there is little or no movement at all.

There are a few medical conditions that prevent an epidural from being given e.g. very low blood pressure or a previous back injury. Most epidurals work by numbing the lower half of the body completely, but occasionally the injection may not work correctly, and this may leave you with one side of the abdomen that is not affected. There are no known side effects on the baby.

Transition

The very end of the first stage of labour is the most stressful. Contractions may be long and strong, come thick and fast and feel irregular. This is usually due to one part of the cervix not being as fully dilated as the rest. Usually it is the front part of the cervix that is slower to dilate and this is known as the anterior lip. If you feel the urge to push, tell the doctor straightaway, and he will do an internal examination to check whether the cervix is fully dilated. If it is not, he will ask you to wait a while. Change positions to ease the discomfort. Try sitting up or turning on all fours. You may need to blow out to help prevent you from holding your breath and pushing.

This transition is the bridge you need to cross to reach the less

stressful second stage, when you can begin to push your baby out into the world.

Second Stage (The Pushing Stage)

The second stage of labour is when you now push the baby out. Each contraction at this stage helps to push the baby down the birth canal. It is a relatively short journey but it can take one or two hours. The vagina is made up of several muscular folds, which stretch and give way to accommodate the baby. With each contraction the baby moves further down the canal, but then slips back a little after the contraction has ended. Note that the birth canal is not a straight line; the baby has to turn as he moves along, and he needs to be in just the right positions to fit through. It is like fitting a key into a lock.

Pushing

Traditionally, mothers are told to hold their breath and push as long and as hard as possible with each contraction. This can be effective but it can also make the mother's blood pressure rise very high and then fall, which is not very good for the baby. Some women feel happier giving little breaths and little pushes, usually making a noise like a grunt with each push.

It is recommended that you listen to your body and go along with what it is telling you to do. If you feel unsure, try giving little pushes and little breaths with each contraction. If this does not seem to work, you can then move on to holding your breath and pushing as hard as you can.

The Birth

The second stage is a lot of hard work, but when you realize that the baby is about to be born, you may find new strength to cope. In fact some women describe this stage as almost enjoyable, especially when the baby's head can be seen. Prior to this, you will have been pushing quite hard, but as the head appears, the doctor will ask you to pant and push gently so that the head is born slowly. When the head is through, the baby turns inside you and the shoulders are born one at a time. Often this happens very quickly, and the next

thing you know the baby is being delivered, perhaps up onto your tummy, for you to greet each other!

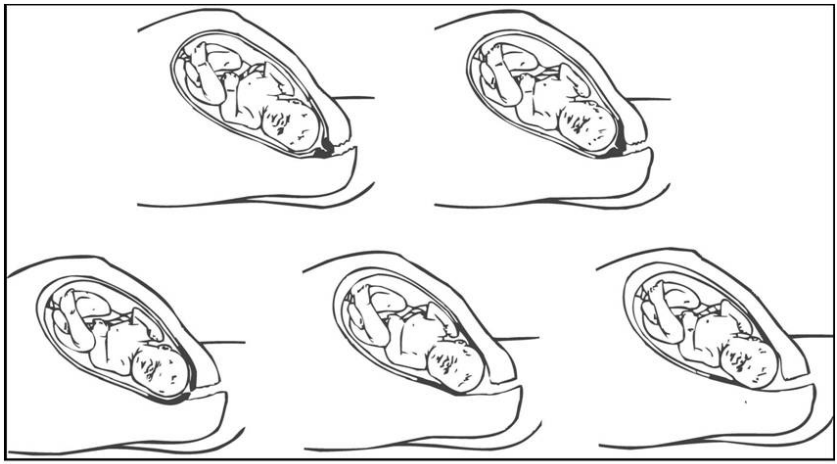

Fig. 42: Stages of Labour

Episiotomy

In certain cases, the doctor may make a cut through the muscles of the vagina to increase the space for the baby to get through. This is called an episiotomy. It may also be made if the baby is very small, very early, or if forceps or a ventouse (vacuum extraction) is used. With a normal delivery, the doctor monitors the area called the perineum at the base of the vagina. This small triangle of muscle thins and stretches to allow the baby to come through. Ideally, the doctor will help you to give birth slowly, so that it has enough time to stretch properly, but sometimes it tears as the baby is born. If he feels it will need to tear quite a lot before the baby finally gets through, he may cut it instead, to direct the cut away from the anal sphincter. An upright position, and controlled breathing as the baby is born, can help avoid a cut. After delivery, the cut or the tear will need stitching.

Caesarean Section

The doctor may tell you before you go into labour that you will need a caesarean section. This may become necessary because the placenta may have embedded low down in the uterus, or because

your pelvis is an awkward shape or is too small. Caesareans are also performed as an emergency if the baby is in distress, or if there are other complications and the baby needs to be born quickly.

With a caesarean birth, the baby is delivered from the abdomen and in many cases, this is done after the woman has been given an epidural. This means that you are awake throughout the process. Sometimes however, this is not possible, and the caesarean has to be done under general anaesthetic.

The Third Stage (Delivery of the Placenta)

After the Baby Is Born

Soon after the baby is born, the doctor will clamp and cut the cord and wait until the placenta (afterbirth) has been delivered. The placenta is what supports the baby throughout most of the pregnancy, but now comes away from the wall of the uterus, where it has been embedded. After it is delivered, the uterus contracts quickly, closing off the blood vessels and minimizing bleeding. This usually happens naturally and with little effort.

The Placenta

After the placenta has been delivered, the doctor will examine it to ensure it is complete and that no part of it has been left inside the uterus. He also checks that it has the right number of veins and arteries, and that there are no lumps or pale spots in it.[1]

Fig. 44: Removing the Placenta

Chapter 54

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best and healthiest way to feed a baby. It also helps the mother to get back into shape. This lesson will teach nursing mothers the importance of breastfeeding, and how to get it going well.[1]

8 Reasons Why Breastfeeding Is Important

1. Breastfeeding is important because there is simply no substitute for human milk. Many doctors recommend that mothers nurse their babies for the entire first year of life, if not longer.

2. Human milk contains the ideal proportions of more than two hundred ingredients including protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and antibodies—that are not duplicated in any baby formula. These ingredients provide not only the essential building blocks of growth, but also protect infants from illness.[2]

3. Research shows that breastfed babies have a lower incidence of ear infections, upper respiratory infections, asthma, allergies, and possibly even serious chronic illnesses such as juvenile diabetes and childhood cancer.

4. Breastfeeding helps shrink the uterus back to its normal size. When you breastfeed, a hormone called oxytocin is released which helps to contract the womb back to its normal size.

5. It also helps to use up excess fat stored up during pregnancy.

6. Breastfeeding holds back menstrual periods, which helps to replenish iron stores lost during pregnancy and childbirth.

7. It gives some protection against serious illnesses like breast and ovarian cancer.

8. A very important emotional connection is developed between

mother and child through the intimacy of breastfeeding.[3]

Principles of Breastfeeding

Proper techniques are important for successful breastfeeding. The following principles are very helpful:

1. Make sure you hold your baby properly so he does not drop out of your hands in case you fall asleep while breastfeeding.

2. When breastfeeding, position yourself comfortably. You can even lie down if you want to.

3. Hold the baby in such a way that your body is not under strain. This will relieve you of all sorts of pains and aches.

While sitting upright, support the baby's head in the crook of your arm on the side you want to nurse from. The baby's body should be lying across your lap and facing toward your chest. Cup your breast outside the areola (the darker area around the nipple) with your other hand, and use your arm to pull your baby toward you.[4]

The Suckling Reflex

Every child is born with an in-built reflex that makes him turn toward the breast and open his mouth, and when the nipple touches the roof of his mouth, a suckling reflex is activated.

1. When the baby's mouth is open, bring him to the breast. Do not try to bend over to bring the nipple to the baby. This will make breastfeeding uncomfortable for both the mother and the baby. It is important for the mother to be comfortably positioned when breastfeeding.

2. When the baby is sleepy, you can get him to open his mouth by lightly stroking your nipple across his mouth.

3. The baby should take the nipple into his mouth and as much areola as possible. If you nurse with only the nipple in the baby's mouth, your nipples will become sore and the baby will not also get enough to eat. The baby's ability to latch on to the nipple and breastfeed well improves with each feed.

4. Allow the baby to nurse about 10 minutes on the first breast, then switch to the other breast and let him continue until he's done. When the baby is full and has finished feeding, he will just drop off the breast himself. Sometimes, the baby may fall asleep when feeding even though he is not full. Gently wake him up so that he can feed long enough and be full. Never try to just pull your baby off. Instead, press down on the breast, and then remove him from the nipple. The next time you feed your baby, start with the breast you didn't start with the first time, since the breast you use first gets better drained. If you have trouble remembering which goes next, attach a safety pin to your bra on that side.

5. One of the things new mothers are most fearful about is whether or not the baby is getting enough to eat. You will know he's doing fine if:

(a) He's feeding frequently, latches on well, and sucks vigorously.

(b) If he wets six to eight diapers a day and has several yellow bowel movements a day.

(c) If he's gaining weight at a consistent rate.

Speak to your doctor if you have doubts or concerns; nursing problems are easier to solve if addressed early. Don't wait until problems are extreme. The most obvious sign of severe dehydration is a sunken soft spot on top of the baby's head. Other symptoms are: sunken eyes, excessive drowsiness, and decreased urination.

Common Problems of Breastfeeding and Their Solutions

Engorgement

Engorgement is when your breasts feel uncomfortably full, swollen and tender. It is your body's signal that you are producing more milk than the baby is taking in. It is most common when your milk first comes in, which is three to four days after birth, and may occur again when the baby is older and does not feed as much as he used to. Engorgement is painful, and it can also lead to feeding difficulties. Sometimes, the nipple angle flattens and the baby has difficulty latching on. Or he may not get enough of the areola into

his mouth to nurse effectively.

Solution: Pump out a little milk before a feeding to make latch-on easier. Be sure that your baby empties your breasts as much as possible with each feeding. Above all, get the milk flowing. When milk is not removed regularly and effectively, production will decline. With frequent nursing of a newborn, engorgement usually subsides in about two days.

Sore Nipples

Many women experience tenderness during the first week or two of breastfeeding, as the nipples adjust to the pressure. If discomfort occurs beyond this early stage, or you continue to feel pain after latch-on while baby nurses, incorrect positioning may be the reason.

Solution: To avoid discomfort, you need to get your baby to apply pressure to a large area of the areola, and not just to your nipple. Be sure your baby opens his mouth wide. Use your index finger to pull down his chin, which will open his mouth wider, enabling him to take in the areola beyond the sore nipples. Most important, don't ignore the problem of sore nipples. If not attended to, your nipples can become cracked and infected.

Clogged Ducts

The first sign of this problem is a wedge-shaped area of tenderness and swelling near the armpit, with the wedge pointing down toward the nipple. The area where the duct is clogged will be painful and swollen. You may see a tiny white spot on the nipple.

Solution: Warm water may help to open up the duct. Also apply gentle pressure on the breast toward the nipple. Nurse frequently to get the milk flowing, starting with the breast that is clogged. Change nursing positions to let your baby drain all areas of the breast.

Mastitis

Fluid trapped anywhere in the body can become infected. So

producing more milk than your baby consumes, or not nursing long enough or often enough to empty the breasts, can cause you to get a breast infection called mastitis. Cracked nipples can also cause this, since they provide an avenue for bacteria to enter the breast. Mastitis feels like flu, fatigue, fever, chills and aches. Your breasts may also be engorged or you may see or feel a swollen, tender, red, warm area.

Solution: See your doctor right away because you'll need an antibiotic that is safe to take while breastfeeding. In the meantime, you can take a painkiller for the fever and pain, and apply moist heat to the sore area for ten minutes, at least four times a day.

Leaking

This is when milk leaks from the breasts. It is normal to leak—in fact, leaking is often a sign of a generous supply. It can occur at the sound of your baby's cry or through anything that reminds you of him. Leaking is most likely to occur when you're away from the baby during the normal feeding times.

Solution: Folding your arms over your chest and pressing gently inward for 30 seconds or so may suppress squirting milk. You'll also need to dress for the occasion with disposable or washable nursing pads. Keep a jacket or sweater on hand in case you need a cover up. Leaking usually lessens with time as you and baby get your supply and demand regulated.

Maintaining Your Supply

The science of milk-making is simple; the more your baby removes, the more you produce. When you're on maternity leave, it is easier to build up a good milk supply. Just nurse at least every two or three hours, and wake your baby to eat during the day if he sleeps more than three hours. However, once you return to work or your baby starts to eat solids, it gets more difficult to implement.

Solution: If you're away from the baby, don't wait until your breasts are uncomfortably full before you pump. Draining them on a frequent basis keeps the milk flowing. Also, nurse more frequently and exclusively at night-time and on weekends.[5]

Chapter 55

What to Expect From Your Baby in the First Twelve Months

The First Month

1. Many newly born babies tend to resemble plucked chickens more than those round, rosy-skinned and bouncy babies we all expect. Their heads are large and seem to be out of proportion with the rest of their skinny, discoloured bodies. Mothers need to be patient because the puffy eyes, bruises, tiny white pimples and cone-shaped heads that are the frequent result of childbirth will all disappear shortly[1]. By the end of the first month, your baby's body will also begin to unfold from its curled foetal position, and his arm and leg movements will be smoother and less jerky. Although the baby is still physically helpless and can't even hold up his own head yet, he has an impressive array of reflexes you'll observe in action all day long. If you put your finger in his mouth he'll begin to suck. Stroke the palm of his hand and he'll grab your finger. His eyes automatically close when faced with a bright light. If your baby is startled by a loud noise or an abrupt change in position, he will throw out his arms and legs and extend his neck.

2. The baby's nearsightedness, which makes objects which are farther than eight inches away seem blurry, contribute to his social detachment. He may seem to look past you at first, although he is likely to respond to the sound of your voice. By the end of the month, you'll begin to notice some occasional smiles, and he will tuck his body to yours when he is held.

3. The baby's increasing alertness is the most obvious sign of his mental development. During the first week or two, he will simply go to sleep if confronted with too much stimuli. But by the end of the month, although he will still sleep away the better part of his days, he will become more curious when awake and focus intently on human faces and brightly coloured patterns.[2]

The Second Month

1. By this month, your baby will begin to fill out more and develop that typical baby look. He will begin to lift his head for a few seconds and examine his surroundings. You will now find him turning in the direction of interesting sounds. The startle reflex will disappear, and the baby will appear longer, now that his body has relaxed and uncurled.

2. Somewhere around six weeks of age, you will witness baby's first true social smile. It's no longer "just gas"; he is genuinely happy to see you. He will probably coo back when you talk to him, or try to engage his toys in conversation with goos and gurgles. He can also make and hold eye contact for a few seconds.

3. As your baby becomes more familiar with his surroundings, he will begin to recognize familiar sights like you, your breast, his toys, his cot, etc. When he sees a meal coming, he will probably start to suck vigorously.

The Third Month

1. By this month, the baby will achieve full neck control. When you put the baby on his stomach, you'll see him push up and hold his head high and look around the room for a minute or two. Vision has also improved so that he can see colours clearly as far away as three feet. Baby can sit up now with support and prefers to do so. His baby chair or swing gives him a better view than lying down.

2. You will find your baby very charming, smiling and babbling to all who hold him. He'll extend his arms to you and kick his legs when he wants to play. The amount of crying will also decrease; he's having too much fun to complain.

3. The baby now differentiates between parents, siblings and the house help, and will make conversational noises to try and attract people around. He will tend to stop what he's doing to listen to you talk. In fact, he may pay attention to you for as long as a half hour at a time. All this is because he's learned to trust you and knows now that you will always respond to his wants and needs.

The Fourth Month

1. During this month, many babies begin to roll over from their stomach to their back. Give baby plenty of playtimes on his belly to help him achieve this feat. You'll probably also notice him trying to "airplane" i.e. extend his head, arms, legs and rock back and forth on his tummy. Now that the baby can use both eyes together (called binocular vision), his hand-to-eye coordination has improved enough for him to hold or wave a toy, or strike objects dangling above him. He can also grab your jewellery, eyeglasses, and hair, and will do so constantly, so watch out!

2. This is the month the baby really begins to let his feelings be known, getting mad if you interrupt his play to change a diaper for example. His "conversations" will also become more involved as he tries out different sounds and waits for you to respond after he says something.

3. By this time, the baby will notice that he has some control over his environment. He will soon figure out that when he shakes a toy it rattles, and when he drops things on the floor, you get annoyed. Brace yourself—it is just the beginning of many such attempts to test your patience!

The Fifth Month

1. Your baby will become very active now, kicking his legs when he feels good, rolling around on the floor (never leave him unattended on a sofa, changing table, or anything else that he might roll off from), splashing water everywhere. You will also notice him reaching for objects, then passing them from hand to hand as he examines them.

2. Not only does baby now know exactly who you are, but he also begins to develop awareness about himself, smiling when he sees himself in a mirror or turning when you call his name. He will probably imitate your facial expressions and pay close attention when you talk to him. Work on this development by keeping him engaged in conversation and pointing out the names of things he's interested in e.g. ball, dog, car.

3. In the past, when baby dropped his rattle, he simply forgot about it. Even the sight of his hands would surprise him if they reappeared within his range of vision. Now, however, he notices when something disappears sight—including you—and will look for it. This concept, called object permanence, is one of the most important mental developments of the first year.

The Sixth Month

1. The baby tends to lean less and less on the pillows behind him. He may even start to sit up with his arms extended to the floor for balance. In the next month, he will probably progress all the way to sitting up on his own. You may have also noticed quite a bit of drool in the past month or two, and his first tooth could sprout any day now, so provide lots of chewy teething toys for him to gum.

2. Your baby is now more awake and alert for the greater part of the day, making him eager to play. He will enjoy seeing other babies and children and demonstrate personal preferences for everything from people to baby food. As his desire to communicate increases, you will notice him trying to combine body language with his verbal expression—struggling and kicking when he doesn't want his diaper changed, for example.

3. Your baby's attention span has increased to the point that he can happily amuse himself with a toy or two while you go about your chores. You will notice him putting objects in his mouth frequently as part of his explorations. He may also try to compare two objects, or look at them upside down or sideways in order to get a different perspective.

The Seventh Month

1. Now that your baby has figured out how to sit up, his next effort will be in trying to get to all the new things he sees. You may think he's lying happily on a play mat, only to turn around and find he's wriggled all the way off of it. He's just too curious to sit still, so he gets to where he wants to go by rocking and scooting on his bottom or slithering on his belly. Baby also masters his act of picking up an object between his thumb and forefinger.

2. Your baby is now very active, and might have trouble settling down for a nap if he knows there is company in the house or something else interesting going on. He may respond to your expressions of emotion—getting serious if you hurt yourself, clinging if you appear nervous, imitating your expressions and sounds during play. But his own personality will begin to unfold too: focused, with a long attention span; or easily frustrated when a toy doesn't work his way; or quiet and uncertain when faced with new people or places.

3. As he develops an understanding of cause and effect, baby will delight in toys that respond when he hits them (for instance, a xylophone or electric game that "talks back" when a button is pressed). He also begins to get the idea that certain things he does annoy you, and that when you say "no," that is what you mean.

The Eighth Month

1. This is the month many babies begin to crawl. If you haven't already installed cabinet locks and security gates, do it now before an injury occurs. You never know when baby will first make his way to the staircase or discover the wonders of a bathroom cabinet. Note that there are some infants who never crawl at all—they scoot around a bit then proceed directly to cruising and walking. If your baby is one of them, that is fine.

2. Once baby is mobile, he may have a lot less patience for sitting around on your lap. Don't be surprised if he tries to squirm away when you pick him up—it's nothing personal, he is just busy. He may now dislike his cot, mechanical swing, or anything else that keeps him confined and he will let you know it by resisting furiously when you try to put him in one of these devices.

3. Now that baby is crawling off and doing more and more things independently, he comes to an important conclusion: He is a separate person. This is exciting for him but also scary. Even the most sociable babies may become cautious around other people, including familiar faces like Grandma and Grandpa. Make him feel better by not forcing him on people he resists, and give him plenty of time to warm up to new situations.

The Ninth Month

1. Around this month, the crawling baby learns to pull himself up to a standing position by holding onto the coffee table or anything that will support his weight—and even things that won't, so you need to watch out. Baby may also irritate you by banging objects together and picking up leftover scraps of food or carpet lint with his now mastered grasp, which can handle objects as tiny as a pea.

2. The baby's anxiety around strangers may make him stick to you more. Sometimes, he may cling to your legs even when the two of you are home alone and you're trying desperately to get things done. Still, your child's curiosity will win out, and he will go off and explore on his own for short periods until he gets anxious again and needs some parental assurance. But when you are in sight and he feels safe and secure, he will be quite expressive and sociable with others.

3. An entirely new world of play is opening up to your baby as he discovers the concept of in-and-out, as in one object fitting neatly inside another. Give your baby the opportunity to develop this concept. If you haven't already done so, fill a low kitchen drawer or cabinet with different size containers, pots and pans, measuring cups, and plastic utensils such as spatulas and spoons. You will discover how well this kind of activity can keep him occupied—maybe even long enough for you to cook a meal or have a phone conversation.

The Tenth Month

1. Baby develops another level of mobility where now, not only can he stand at the coffee table, but he can walk holding onto it. Children this age spend a great deal of time perfecting this activity. First, he will inch along while sliding his feet. Next, he will just use his hands for balance while putting his weight on his feet. Then, he will pick his feet up and step, while crossing hand-over-hand. The final stage is using other pieces of furniture as a bridge so that he can actually work his way around the room.

2. At this stage, the baby develops a type of sign language to help let you know what he wants. This usually takes the form of pointing

and grunting at an object, pushing away food or a toy he's not interested in, or holding out his arms when he wants to be picked up. Some experts believe you can teach more complicated symbols, like touching his fingers to his lips when he wants to eat, tapping his palm when he wants more of something. Try it and see if your baby will pick up on the idea.

3. Now is the time to get firm with your "nos". Baby not only understands what you're saying, but has enough memory to recollect that you got mad when he did something previously. He may tend to take advantage of you when he remembers that last night when he cried in the middle of the night, you picked him up and rocked him; or you brought him into your bed. Be careful about falling into habits that may be difficult to break later on.

The Eleventh Month

1. Baby now has the ability and skill to climb, and he tends to go for things that previously he couldn't get to or reach. You have to watch him diligently so he doesn't hurt himself as he explores.

2. Feeding the baby around this time can be a struggle. It may be because now, he can actually get a spoon to his mouth all by himself, and he has become independent enough to want to do it himself. You may just have to allow him to feed himself rather than have him throwing tantrums and refusing to eat. It may be very messy as he flips bowls of food over, dumps them on his head, or throw the food around when he becomes bored, but you will just have to clean up after.

3. Your little one may now be babbling "da-da" and "ma-ma" and now knows the difference. He knows that "ma-ma" means you. He will probably also recognize his own name, and relate to ideas that go with the words e.g. pointing to the sky when he hears an airplane, for example. This is the beginning of what experts refer to as receptive language skills i.e. understanding the meaning of specific words before he actually has the ability to say them.

The Twelfth Month

1. Around this month, the child becomes a toddler: he starts to

walk. He needs more monitoring because he is now very slippery. If your child isn't toddling around his first birthday, don't be alarmed. Babies are expected to walk between 9 to 18 months, with most babies walking, on the average, at about 13 months. As long as your child's doing some combination of standing, stepping, cruising—with or without holding onto something—he's on the right track.

2. Babies become rather stubborn during this month. If he doesn't feel like doing something, it will be difficult to get him to do it. You may find him resisting bedtime, refusing meals, getting annoyed if you leave him strapped in the stroller too long while shopping. He also now has a real sense of humour, enjoying interaction—especially with other kids, and can be quite lovable when he is in the mood.

3. This is a great time for playing games with him. He will enjoy games like covering himself with a blanket and waiting for you to say: "Where's baby?" so he can pull it off. He also becomes fascinated with his body parts, so this is the time to start naming, "nose", "hair", "eyes" and letting him point to them. Another funny development will be your child's desire to imitate you. He'll attempt to comb his own hair, position his diaper beneath him, talk on the phone, etc.

Chapter 56

Immunization of Your Baby

Depending on the part of the world in which you live, you may need some or all of these vaccines. This will be determined by your doctor.

Polio (IPV)

What it does

Protects against the polio virus, which causes muscle pain, difficulty in breathing and possibly paralysis.

When recommended

One dose each at 2 and 4 months, a third dose between 6 and 18 months, and a fourth between 4 and 6 years. It is highly recommended that all four doses be given in the form of IVP — inactivated polio vaccine.

Potential side effects

Possible soreness at the injection site as well as fever.

Measles and Mumps

What it does

Protects against these two viral diseases:

(a) Measles: which causes a rash and cold-like symptoms, but in rare cases can result in blindness, pneumonia and even death.

(b) Mumps: which causes fever, swollen glands, and occasionally meningitis and deafness, and rubella (also known as German measles), which causes a rash and fever.

When recommended

The first dose between 12 and 15 months and the second between 4 and 6 years.

Potential side effects

Most common are a rash and slight fever, less common side effects are swelling around the neck and joints and pain in the arms and legs.

Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough

What it does

This immunization protects against:

What it does

This immunization protects against:

(a) **Diphtheria**: which causes fever, difficulty in breathing, and possibly even death.

(b) **Tetanus**: also known as lockjaw, which attacks the central nervous system.

(c) **Whooping cough**: which can cause pneumonia, severe coughing and brain damage

When recommended

The first three doses are given at 2, 4, and 6 months, the fourth between 15 and 18 months, and the fifth between 4 and 6 years.

Potential side effects

In the past, there were reactions of fever and soreness, and less frequently, vomiting. In some rare cases, the child experiences a high fever or seizure. Today's vaccine leads to minimized reactions.

Hepatitis B (HEP B)

What it does

This immunization protects the child against Hepatitis B, which is a viral illness spread by blood or through sexual contact. It can cause liver damage in the form of cirrhosis and cancer.

When recommended

One shot between birth and 2 months, a second between 1 month and 4 months, and a third and final shot between 6 and 18 months

Potential side effects

A very small number (1 to 3 per cent) of children experience injection site swelling and fever. One in 600,000 will have a reaction that results in drop in blood pressure and breathing difficulties.[1]

SECTION 14

PARENTING

Chapter 57

Parenting and What it Involves

Principles of Child-Upbringing

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

Parents must understand that what their children become is dependent on the kind of training they have received. The best training you can give your children is to instil godly and Christian principles in them.

The most important thing for you (as a parent) is also the most important for your child. If God is the centre of your life, then guarantee that Christ Jesus and him crucified, is the same to your child.[1] When it comes to bringing children to church, letting them join the children's service, teaching them how to give offerings, etc., some parents do not want to do so.

The following principles should guide you as parents in carrying out your God-given responsibility of training your children.

Principle No. 1– Your Priority for Your Children Is to Bring Them up in the Lord

Know what you are investing in, and put in your best efforts. What your children become should reflect you. If you are a pastor for example, and you do not want your child to be a pastor, you are a hypocrite. Teach your child to fear the Lord and to serve him.[2]

And, ye fathers....bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:6

Principle No. 2– Your Environment Trains Your Children More than You Do

The community your children live in and the school they attend influences them even more than their parents. Accept the fact that the environment is training your child for you. Therefore, make the effort to control their environment, and don't just give them a set of rules to follow.

7 examples of the environmental things that affect your children:

1. The school your children attend.

2. Who their friends are [it is important to restrict the friendships of your children].

3. Television.

4. Church [create the environment for church].

5. Films.

6. Internet/computer.

7. Neighbours.

Principle No. 3– Training Must Be Focused

Training is repeated action, which when left alone will be continued.

6 things you should train your children to do:

1. Train your child to attend church regularly [parents, demonstrate this by becoming regular church attendees yourselves!]

2. Train your child to have his/her quiet time everyday.[3]

3. Train your child to pray.

4. Train your child to believe in a higher authority that will correct him.

5 Train them to work hard all the time and at everything they do.

6. Train them to be God-conscious at home.[4]

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

Deut. 6:6-8

O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shown thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come.

Psalm 71:17-18

Constant warning that is never followed up does not work. Discipline and reprimand your children when necessary.

Husbands, protect your wives when your children (especially stepchildren) are being disobedient to them. Look after somebody's child and God will look after yours.

Principle No. 4– Ultimately, it Is God Who Will Keep Your Child in the Path of Righteousness

• You must personally know God.

• You must constantly pray for your children.

The unity of the couple is essential[5]. Spend time to pray for one another. The above principles become fruitful if there is peace in the house. Sustain your marriage and things will work out well. Solve problems without drawing your children into the situations to bring curses upon them. It is important to pray that God would turn the hearts of the children to you, their parents. Otherwise, the children will grow up and do everything differently from what their

parents want and like[6]. This is something spiritual, which takes place in the heart and can be achieved only by prayer.

For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:6-7

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Malachi 4:6

Principle No. 5– Develop God-Consciousness at Home

(a) Pray with your children.[7]

(b) Pray together as a family.

(c) Pray at meals.

(d) Pray before you travel.[8]

SECTION 15

NEW DIMENSIONS

Chapter 58

Children by Adoption

There are two ways to have children—the first way is through natural conception and delivery; the second way is through adoption. Adoption is a beautiful act in which you accept and receive a child who is not your biological offspring as your very own. This child is then raised by you just as you would raise a biological child and in the process of time, there is virtually no difference between a biological child and an adopted child. Both the adopted child and the biological child are loved equally and are a real part of a family.[1]

Advantages of Adoption

1. Adoption is the process by which all of us came to be a part of Christ's family.

The Lord adopted us as his very own and we feel accepted as part of the Lord's own family. Adoption is therefore a very deep Christian practice which should not be seen as strange or unacceptable. The following verses show us how we were adopted into the Lord's family.

…I was a stranger and you took me in:

Matthew 25:35

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage…but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father.

Romans 8:15

…accepted in the beloved.

Ephesians 1:6

2. There is a special reward for anyone who adopts a child.

I was a stranger and you took me in…

Matthew 25:35

This is because adoption is the receiving of a stranger into your life and family. As stated clearly in Matthew 25:35, it is this very act (of taking in strangers) that the Lord will reward greatly on the judgement day. Surprisingly, it is not the person with the biological child, but the person with the adopted child who receives this extra blessing from the Lord.

3. Adoption of children also enables the couple to walk in the love of God and manifest this great love of God.

The selfishness of man which makes us care for only our own blood is broken as adoption forces you to love the unloved and the hopeless. This one act of adoption may well be the greatest spiritual achievement of your whole life.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (love), I am nothing.

1Corinthians 13:2

4. Adoption makes you feel normal in society.

Adoption reduces the stress that is placed on childless couples by family, friends and the society as a whole and the couples do not appear to be deficient or lacking in any way. As parents discuss the problems and joys of their children, the parents of the adopted child will have similar experiences to refer to. They will no longer feel left out of any conversation that concerns children and they will no longer feel like the odd one out. This relief of stress can sometimes even increase the couple's fertility and lead to their having a biological child.

5. Adopted children bring a lot of joy and happiness to their parents.

The difference between the parents' lives before and after adoption

can be compared to the difference between night and day.

6. Adopting children removes the pain and stress caused by infertility and the medical challenges that couples experience during this period. [2]

7. Adoption helps you to feel like a normal human being.

After adopting, you begin to feel that you are a normal woman/ man, and a normal parent because you do have children just like every other couple.

8. Adoption saves you the trouble of going through pregnancy and labour with all its attendant and potential risks, dangers and pain.

Challenges of Adoption

1. Finding a child to adopt is very difficult. If you seek, you will find; so keep seeking and you will find eventually, that God has blessed you with a child.

2. Convincing your family and friends to accept your decision. Overcome this by discussing the adoption with them and by being decisive.

3. People may tell your child that he is not your real child. This could shock the child. You may overcome this, by telling the child yourself, at an early age. You may say something like this: " I had no one to look after and to love, and you had no one to look after you. Because of this I took you in and loved you, and you became my child." This early information in a loving way, will protect your child from growing up to receive shocks, since it is the surprise element that is destructive. As time goes on, the child may rather feel special to have been adopted.

4. Your adoption may turn sour because the child may turn his back on you, or his family may show up or people may point out to the child that you are not his biological parents. But just as there are unfortunate stories, there are also success stories.

How to Flow in Adoption

1. Find out where you may be able to get a child—e.g. an orphanage.

2. Take the child into your home for a period of fostering. As the bond develops, go ahead and do the legal work to ensure the child is legally adopted.

3. Seek medical advice and choose a birth date for the child.

4. Believe that this child is God's blessing to your life.

5. Be prepared to birth the child from your womb and heart.

6. Embrace the child wholeheartedly like God embraces us.

7. Provide nice things for the child within your means.

8. Work on your extended family to accept your decision.

9. Entreat them to accept the child, and not to refer to his/her heritage.

10. Understand that every step in life involves risks.

11. Celebrate your adopted child. Have parties and other celebrations for the child just as you would for any biological child.

Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receiveof the Lord…

Ephesians 6:8

Chapter 59

The Loss of a Spouse

The Loss of a Spouse through Death

The death of a spouse has been assessed to be the highest level of trauma. It is followed in second place by divorce. The sorrow that grips you on the loss of a spouse can drive you to your own death if you do not come out of that sorrowful state quickly.[1]

8 Stages

1. Shock—The unexpected has happened. I never dreamt this would happen to me. I am helpless.

2. Denial—This is not really happening to me. I am sure it is simply a bad dream that will soon pass.

3. Fear—What will become of me? Is my life over? How will I cope?

4. Guilt—It is my fault. Maybe there was something I could have done to prevent this from happening.

5. Hurt/pain—I ache, my heart bleeds.

6. Anger—Why me? Why did I have to lose my husband? How could God have allowed this to happen to me?

7. Acceptance—So be it. What has happened has happened. I will face it.

8. Healing—The Lord is working on me. The oil, his Holy Spirit, is a blam for my wound. His love soothes and takes away my pain. He is changing me—making me a better, stronger person.[2]

What to Do if a Spouse Dies

1. Allow yourself to grieve.

Weep over your loss. You need to express your pain. You are likely to become bitter and sink into deep depression. Unexpressed grief may also lead to various sicknesses.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Matthew 5:4

2. Be aware that an overwhelming sorrow can possess and control you.

You need to stop crying and being sorrowful quickly, otherwise you will find it difficult to regain a zest for life. In that sorrowful state, you may find no purpose to life—it will cease to hold any meaning for you, and you may consciously or unconsciously invite your own death.[3]

…but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

3. Be heavenly-minded about your spouse's departure.

God's Word assures us that those who have trusted in Jesus will be given an eternal home in heaven. Death is not the end of your spouse's life, but the beginning of an eternity with the Lord in an infinitely better place. May this be your comfort and hope.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1

4. Overcome depression.

Learn to overcome depression by having a thankful heart. A prescribed antidote for depression is a lifestyle of praise. Worship God in the privacy of your home, and publicly, in church.

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness…

Isaiah 61:3

5. Accept your bereavement and move on.

Although the loss of your spouse may be devastating, be assured that God knows about it, and will comfort you. The assurance that God cares and will take care of you, should help you to accept your loss and to forge ahead with your life.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Psalm 34:18

6. Dream again. You may choose to remarry.

Approach the future with hope in God's promises to take care of you and your family. The Word of God declares that he is a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows. You must be fully persuaded that he is a good God who has good plans for you.

A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

Psalm 68:5

Be encouraged to dream again. If you would like to remarry, trust the Lord for a suitable partner.[4]

Factors to Consider Before Remarriage

1. If you have children, your new spouse is going to "inherit" the children and become a stepmother or stepfather[5]. You may also become a step-parent.

2. Step-relationships are usually difficult and fraught with temptations, accusations and counter-accusations. Almost every such relationship becomes bitter and distorted with time.

3. You need to evaluate your preparedness to handle step-relationships as you decide to remarry. Are you ready to work hard towards a successful merging of two families?

4. Although you will think about your deceased spouse, you must constantly fight the temptation of comparing him/her to the new one in a negative way.

NB: For additional insight, refer to Chapter 23 on “The Step Home”.

The Loss of a Spouse through Divorce

It is important for a divorced person to understand that it is possible to recover from the trauma of a failed marriage. God’s grace, his help, his favour is what you need to restore your wounded soul to wholeness.[6]

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

Psalm 147:3

While God’s grace is available for your emotional healing, you are the key to your own recovery. Whether you get healed or how soon you do get healed depends on you.

8 Stages

1. Shock—The unexpected has happened. I never dreamt this would happen to my marriage. I am helpless**.**

2. Fear—What will become of me? Is my life over? How will I cope?

3. Guilt—I have failed. It is my fault. Maybe there was something I could have done to prevent this from happening.

4. Hurt/pain—I ache, my heart bleeds. I feel rejected.

5. Anger—How could he/she do this to me? How could he/she treat me so contemptuously?

6. Acceptance—So be it. What has happened has happened. I will

face it.

7. Forgiveness—I choose to forgive him/her. I let go, I release the grudge. I am liberated.

8. Healing—The Lord is working on me. His Holy Spirit is like oil, balm for my wound. His love soothes and takes away my pain. He is changing me—making me a better, stronger person.[7]

What to Do if You Get Divorced

1. Forgive your ex-spouse.

Forgiveness will move you in the right direction—towards God's healing for you. You will not get healed if you do not genuinely forgive your spouse. Besides, God will not forgive you, if you don't forgive. A test of true forgiveness is to be able to pray sincerely for the well-being of your ex-spouse. You will be liberated from bitterness as you forgive. Only then, can you begin to experience joy again. It is possible for you to forgive; allow the Holy Spirit to help you.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Mark 11:25

2. Ask God to forgive you.

While both spouses contribute in a measure to the breakdown of a marriage, often one partner precipitates the collapse. It is good for both spouses to ask God's pardon and mercy. Sometimes, we do not even know that we displease him, so do not be self-righteous. Feelings of guilt and condemnation are commonly experienced. However, it is comforting to know that God's disposition is to show mercy and compassion. As you receive God's pardon, analyse your faults and work on correcting them. Your efforts in this regard will be evidence of your genuine repentance.[8]

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Psalm 103:8

3. Talk about your pain with spiritually mature counsellors.

Talk to your pastors or to godly friends. You will find it therapeutic to release your hurt by sharing it with a sympathetic listener. The marriage may not be restored, but you will receive the comfort of God's Word. After a while though, you must consciously stop talking about your pain, else you will wear your counsellors out, and you will not make much progress in getting healed emotionally.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed…

James 5:16

4. Receive God's love.

Replace feelings of rejection and condemnation with a confidence in God's Word that assures you of his love and his good plans for your life. Read specific Scriptures which will encourage you, and then allow God to embrace you with his unconditional love. You will also find it very helpful to read appropriate Christian material which address your needs.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love…

1 John 4:16

5. Be deeply thankful to the Lord.

Your situation could have been worse. Look at the good things derived from the failed marriage, e.g. children, and bless the Lord. Consider yourself to be truly blessed, even to be alive. The end of a marriage is not the end of the world. A grateful heart will take away any tendencies towards self-pity and bitterness. A grateful heart also results in a merry heart, which "doeth good like medicine…" (Proverbs 17:22).

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

6. Get actively involved in church.

When you help others, you take the focus off yourself and your problems. This is a cure for self-centredness and self-pity. Learn to comfort others with the comfort you have received. Your acts of service for the Lord and his people are also an expression of your faith in God, which will please Him. Indeed, you will find it a joy and a privilege to be able to serve the Lord gladly in spite of the stigma of a divorce.

Blessed be…the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

7. Look to the future with hope.

It is important to keep hope alive. Trust the Lord with your life daily. During the process of healing, there may be times when you will be overcome with feelings of despondency. Do not despair that you are not getting better. Learn to find refuge in the Lord, and he will give you the strength to rise up and forge ahead. You may or may not get remarried, but you can still have a good and a fulfilled life.8 Things will get better—believe it! With a good God on your side, look forward with great hope to new dimensions!

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Romans 15:13

SECTION 16

TYPICAL QUESTIONS OF MARRIED COUPLES AND THE ANSWERS

Chapter 60

Typical Questions of Married Couples and the Answers

Introduction

The principle of acceptance is the key to resolving many marital problems. Remember, that you and your spouse have two differing perspectives that may not necessarily be wrong. Compromise must work in your marriage by each party esteeming the other as better than himself/herself. A good compromise is created when you respect your spouse's views and ideas and you consider them to be better than yours.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Philippians 2:3

God expects you, as a married person, to endeavour to do your best in all that is expected of you, while accepting the reality that you cannot personally resolve every problem in your marriage—only God can. Know that you are not called to be a personal "Holy Spirit" to your spouse; specifically, to convict of sin, of righteousness and of judgement (that is the work of the Holy Spirit). Your duty is to inform your spouse of your concerns in a loving way and to leave the rest to God after much prayer. Only God can change a person. It will also help you to seek pastoral counsel and assistance.

Marriage often means that you may have to live with and contain an unpleasant aspect of your marriage that has not changed yet. It may be compared to living with a chronic disease such as asthma or diabetes. A person just contains or manages the disease so that it does not destroy the rest of his life, which is good.

Mistrust

Q. I believe my husband is hiding things from me. He says he'll be back in 10 minutes, but returns hours later with various excuses, like he went to look for an ATM machine.

A. Trust is built over a period, it does not just happen. What appears to be happening in this relationship is that communication has broken or is breaking down. When that happens, each person tends to second-guess the other's motives and actions. It might well be that the "excuses" are genuine; however, because of the lack of communication and a general atmosphere of mistrust, he cannot be believed.

On the other hand, these may be signs of possible unfaithfulness developing.

Both parties are advised to improve upon communication in the marriage. A wife must boldly ask her husband where he goes, without arousing controversy. There must be more openness/ transparency. Furthermore, the wife must examine herself and see if there is something she is doing that makes her husband want to stay out instead of remaining at home.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20 "Openness"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36 "Communication in Marriage"; Chapter 10 pg. 37¬39,"Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage").

Q. My wife does not relate well with my friends: especially those of the opposite sex. What do I do?

A. I believe it is an issue of insecurity. It is the responsibility of every husband to make sure his wife feels secure and firm in the driving seat. When this is absent, it shows sometimes in her hostile reaction towards the husband's female friends.

It is recommended that married people must have mutual friends as much as possible. If a husband's female friends do not get on well with his wife and vice versa, such friendships must be discontinued to ensure stability of the marriage. The couple should work out a compromise.

The most important remedy, however, is to ensure that everything

is done to make the wife feel secure. Trust in the relationship must be nurtured. The wife should also work on her insecurities.

(Refer to Chapter 7 pg. 22-27 "Christian Home"; Chapter 10 pg. 37-39 "Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage").

Q. I have a fear that my wife will one day be in the hands of another lover. How can I deal with this?

A. You must first be able to place a finger on exactly what gives you such fears. Is it what you have experienced in the past, or in your background? Is it that she appears to be happier and more comfortable in the company of other men? Or that you believe you are not able to satisfy her enough?

Whatever it is, you should try and identify the source of the fear and deal with it. Here again, communication, when good, will be able to unearth the problem. The husband must vent his fears in the appropriate manner and atmosphere.

Furthermore, whenever he sees himself falling short, he must redouble his efforts to ensure that his wife is happy. Suspicion indicates the absence of real love (agape), for perfect love casts out all fear.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

1 John 4:18

Unfaithfulness is also a spirit, so it must be tackled spiritually through prayer. Finally, the husband must deal with his insecurity by forging closer friendship with his wife.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-31 "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 10 pg. 37-39 "Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage").

Q. He is always reminding me of my past life. How do I deal with it?

A. A married couple is counselled to be historically naked before each other. That means that as much as possible, each party must

be sufficiently exposed to the other's past. The effect of this is to avoid surprises in the marriage. The aim, however, is not to make one despise the other and hold them to ransom because of their past. Even Christ forgives us our numerous indiscretions hidden in our past.

It is obvious that the husband who is always holding his wife's past before her eyes lacks confidence and would want to hang on to that past as a means of making her feel guilty, perhaps as an antidote for his own insecurity. Do not use your spouse's openness to taunt, control, or manipulate her, or she will stop confiding in you.

The wife is counselled to ignore the taunting and encourage herself by the fact that Christ forgave our past. Above all, she must pray about the situation, and continually repay her husband's "evil" with good.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20 "Openness"; Chapter 8 pg. 28-31 "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. He has a female friend I am worried about, but he seems not to care about it.

A. The issue is why the worry. Is it because you do not trust that he can take care of himself or that the relationship is manifestly dangerous?

In any case, every husband must understand that women have instincts to smell "danger" in the air when another woman is drawing too close.

Where there is lack of trust because there is absence of communication, these fears usually thrive. In our counselling, each party is told that for there to be cleaving there must be a leaving. Examples of those we must leave are close friends, especially of the opposite sex. (Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 24-26, "The God-Type of Marriage").

Furthermore, unfaithfulness in marriage is a gradual thing. It starts with spending more time with someone not your spouse, even on the phone.

Selfishness in the marriage creates that situation being complained of. The husband may not be getting enough attention from the wife and therefore may be getting it somewhere else. It is the responsibility of both partners to create a place they can both call a home. Each must think more about the other spouse's happiness than his/hers.

Improve upon the communication and romantic life with your husband and find an appropriate time to raise the matter for discussion in a non-confrontational and unemotional manner. Most men feel accused of infidelity when such issues are raised, so you need to tread cautiously.

(Refer to Chapter 7 pg. 22-27, "Christian Home"; Chapter 10 pg. 37-39, "Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage").

Q. He speaks to female friends late into the night on the phone.

A. Trust is very important if your marriage is going to last or to be harmonious and sweet. Suspicion is very unhealthy. "Love...believes all things, hopes all things..." (1Corinthians 13:7). "...perfect love casts away all fears..." (1John 4:18).

Your husband should of course be able to open up his telephone conversation to you unless he feels threatened or accused. Husbands should also "flee all appearances of evil" and give no room for questions, as "the servant of God should be blameless".

A compelling need to call or engage in long, intimate conversation with the opposite sex deep into the night on a consistent basis is questionable. Check your heart and motives carefully and sincerely. Learn to also consider deeply the concerns of your wife—love does not insist on its own way.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20,"Openness", Chapter 8 pg. 38-31, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She keeps suspecting me.

A. Where this kind of suspicion is present, the explanation can be one of two things. The first is that there might be a history of

betrayal or unfaithfulness. The second might be that one party feels very insecure in the relationship.

If the issue is the first, that is trust betrayed, then the only counsel is that there must be total forgiveness from the party who has been betrayed and the guilty party must work extra hard to regain the trust of his spouse. Don't let the past colour your future actions. Find and absorb appropriate Christian material on insecurity in order to be healed.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-31, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 21 pg. 89-92, "Problem Solving in Marriage").

Q. He gets angry when he sees me chatting with someone.

A. This means that the husband feels insecure and jealous. The principles of love must be brought to bear on the situation. "Love does not seek her own". If these insecurities are also based on something in the past then forgiveness must be applied and the record wiped out: "Love does not keep a record of wrongs suffered."

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-31, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. When he is going out he does not say where he is going.

A. It appears that not much effective communication is going on here. Furthermore, the husband is not showing enough respect for his wife. Sometimes these things happen because he knows his wife will not like where he is going, and he does not want to tell lies about it, so he just leaves.

The solution might be that there must be more transparency in that marriage. Both parties must encourage conversation. The wife must not appear to be an "investigative journalist" asking only probing questions. That attitude does not encourage conversation.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 19-21, "The God-Type of Marriage").

Looks

Q. He has a pot belly.

A. It is true that in marriage, what is most important is the character of the person one is marrying. However, the packaging is also important, because most of the time it is the packaging that makes the product either attractive or unattractive. It is only after that, that its sweetness or otherwise would be known.

In the same way, the manner in which people carry themselves around, to a large extent determines whether their partners will continue to find them attractive. Unfortunately, many people just lose control of their bodies when they marry.

However, it must also be borne in mind that growing up usually comes with some weight gain as well.

The most important issue is how one goes about telling the spouse about how fat or lean he/she is. Speak to edify and not to break down another's confidence. Accept your spouse's looks, and concentrate on the inner qualities rather than the packaging. Partner together on how to help with the weight gain problem.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 32-36, "Communication in Marriage"; Chapter 10 pg. 37-39, "Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage").

Q. He squeezes his face.

A. Probably there is something he is not happy about. Arrange to discuss it or seek counsel from your pastors on the issue if it is a thorny one. It is not easy to live happily with a husband who always presents a squeezed face. The husband is to live joyfully with his wife all the days of his life. Let the issues die and be cheerful.

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 45, "Duties of the Husband—Make Her Feel Happy At Home").

Q. I want her to put on some weight.

A. Putting on weight, or losing weight, are things we cannot allow to be the foundation for happiness in the marriage. Some put on weight easily, others do not; some lose weight easily while others may struggle their whole lifetime to lose even a kilo. The key to happiness and lasting friendship is the key of acceptance. Accept each other and walk in love. Your expectation may or may not come to pass, but pray for the grace to accept what you cannot change.

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 109, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the Physical Structure or Looks of Your Spouse").

Romance and Sex

Q. My wife does not like kissing.

A. Kissing is encouraged to promote intimacy between a couple. Kissing is a form of communicating and expressing affection. The wife must gradually tune her mind to accept and flow with this form of communication as well.

If your wife doesn't like to be kissed do not force it on her. It might be due to any of the following reasons:

(a) She may just not be comfortable with it because of her background. After all, it is not everything that you also like.

(b) It might also be because of the husband's bad oral hygiene. Try and make sure that anytime you want to kiss her your breath is very fresh and inviting enough. Few people can resist something, fresh, minty and possibly, tasty.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 36, "Communication in Marriage—Other Ways of Communicating"; Chapter 38 pg. 171,"Assorted Biblical Principles 1-12—Principle of the Importance of Kissing").

Q. My wife does not like sex much.

A. It must be understood that generally speaking, women do not like sex as much as men do.

The greatest sex organ all of us have is our minds and therefore there must be a proper conditioning of the mind for it.

In fact for women, sex is more than just an act. 1 Peter 3:7 encourages husbands to dwell with their wives according to knowledge. This means that for any marriage to be smooth and peaceful, husbands must know more about their wives and the frustrations will be less.

Wives must also understand that when a man is starved of sex, his potential for adultery is enhanced, so they must perform their God-given duty; something which only they can do for their husbands.

(Refer to Chapter 10 pg. 38, “Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage—Conditions that are Likely to Aggravate a Potential for Unfaithfulness”; Chapter 25 pg. 106, The Key of Acceptance—“Accept the “Masculinity” or “Femininity” of Your Spouse”).

Q. My husband does not seem to understand that my libido is not always high i.e. I don’t like sex all the time.

A. Sex in marriage is not just about the libido of one partner. Some of the basic reasons for sex in marriage can help the thinking here.

First, God designed sex in marriage for procreation and whether your libido is high or not is not relevant: there will be no children without sex. It is interesting to note that some couples who have no issue, often allow quarrels and misunderstandings to prevent them from coming together at the time when the wife is most fertile. This unfortunately accounts for some of the childlessness we witness around us.

Second, it is each spouse’s divine duty to satisfy the other sexually and therefore irrespective of either a high or a low libido—the duty must be performed whether we feel like it or not.

Lastly, God created sexual intercourse in marriage for the pleasure and enjoyment of both husband and wife. In this case, a wife may not derive any pleasure if her mind is not tuned to flow with the whole idea.

All three reasons for sex may need to be applied whether your libido is high or low at a particular time. You must fulfil the purpose for marriage.

(Refer to Chapter 28 pg. 132-133, "Introduction to Sexual Happiness—8 Reasons for Sex"; Chapter 31 pg. 140¬141,"Pleasurable Sex"; Chapter 32 pg. 142-143, "Dutiful Sex"; Chapter 36 pg. 159-160 "Sex for Reproduction").

Q. My wife is not romantic and she does not like sex at all.

A. First of all, it must be borne in mind that sex is the only thing that differentiates the institution of marriage from an ordinary relationship between friends or even siblings. It is therefore a very vital part of the marriage.

Secondly, every husband ought to know that wives are very different from men in their attitude and response to the sex question. Whereas many a young Christian man enters into marriage primarily for the sexual experience, the motivation for women is completely different. (Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 105 The Key of Acceptance —"Accept the "Masculinity" or "Femininity" of Your Spouse").

The net effect of this is that every husband must accept the fact that he is the initiator in the marriage. The husband must therefore dwell with his wife according to knowledge. He must know when to make a move, how to make the advances, when to pursue and when to pause. It is all an art that comes or gets better with dwelling together as a couple.

For the woman, it takes more to be turned on. Indeed, how a husband speaks with his wife in the morning before he leaves for work could influence the kind of reception he receives in the evening in the bedroom. Women are more inclined to harbouring hurts. So in order to have pleasurable, unimpeded and unfettered sexual intercourse with your wife, every husband must virtually woo his wife. Do not behave like a master who is demanding his pound of flesh. Find out what makes your wife feel loved and it will release her sexually.

(Refer to Chapter 31 pg. 140-141, "Pleasurable Sex").

Q. She lays down too many conditions concerning sex. I have to talk too much before she gives in.

Every wife should bear in mind that it is her God-given duty to satisfy her husband sexually. In fact, she will not be doing him any favour by agreeing to have sex with him. The fact that he is a Christian does not mean he cannot be tempted by a "strange woman" who presents sex to him on a silver platter, without sweat.

A wife must see it as a privilege given by God that she is the only person her husband is permitted to engage in sex with. Once you appreciate it that way, I believe you will not withhold yourself from your husband.

A wife should know that one of her roles as a total wife is to be a sex partner and she must discharge that role with love and excitement. She must also initiate sex with her husband. Laying down conditions concerning sex is not the best way to perform your God-given duty.

If a wife feels there are certain things she needs from her husband, she must not use sex as a weapon to obtain her demands. In the exchange of vows, the wife commits to give herself "fully" to her husband with no strings attached. Learn to discuss issues amicably, without using what you exclusively provide for your spouse as a means to get at him. Love is not self-seeking and does not insist on her own.

(Refer to Chapter 10 pg. 37-39,"Faithfulness and Unfaithfulness in Marriage"; Chapter 12 pg. 48-52, "Duties of the Wife"; Chapter 13 pg. 53-54, "The Total Wife").

Q. Sex is a scarce commodity in our marriage.

A. One of the basic biblical reasons for marriage is to avoid fornication and so that those who do not have the gift of self-control might marry and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body. We are to conduct our marriages such that Satan does not take advantage of us. When sex becomes a scarce commodity—

something you want but cannot get from the legitimate source, it opens the door for various temptations and sins. Do not give place to the devil.

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

(Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 49,"Duties of the Wife—Provide Sexually for Your Husband"; Chapter 13 pg. 53, "The Total Wife—A Sex Partner").

Q. Sex is no longer exciting. I need more styles.

A. Having exciting sex in a marriage is the responsibility of both husband and wife. You must both be committed to deriving the best from the gift that God has given. If you need more exciting styles, go for it! "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled" (Hebrews 13:4). There is no need to stay with something you are not enjoying when you are allowed to explore the sex act with different positions.

There is no law in Scripture against being innovative sexually, within the context of the marriage. As the marriage grows all things settle into a routine. This usually robs the marriage of excitement. It is therefore the responsibility of the couple to introduce certain things that will rekindle the flame. Try new positions, that is, sexual styles. Do not be content with the old "missionary position".

When wives introduce some of these innovations it tends to be more exciting. Wives, try and surprise your husband sometimes with some new styles. It will take the monotony and predictability in your sex life away. However, it must be emphasized that being

romantic in the marriage is neither a duty for men nor women. It is a responsibility for both parties to ensure that the flame keeps burning.

Encourage your spouse to flow with the exploration and assure him/her that it will take you to higher levels. There is no need to chide your spouse about something that he/she may not be used to. Accept also the fact that as with food, there will be ordinary days and exhilarating (exciting) days. Do not fall into the deception that another woman will be more exciting. She is not a wife yet.

(Refer to Chapter 33 pg. 145-149, "Exciting Sex").

Q. He wants to have sex weekly.

A. The sexual life of a couple is a thermometer of their relationship and love (see the "Sexometer" in Chapter 28 pg. 127). As a husband, your role as a total husband is to satisfy your wife sexually. To sentence her to once weekly is not fair.

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

However, there may be other reasons that are affecting the husband's libido: medical, stress from work, tiredness, or even unfaithfulness.

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 43-47, "Duties of the Husband; Chapter 35 pg. 158, "Common Fears about Sex—Fear of Impotence")

Q. He prefers sleeping on the sofa instead of with me in our

bed.

A. When a husband's attitude is to sleep apart from his wife it may be that he is avoiding intimacy with her or it may be just a bad habit he has acquired of preferring the sofa to the bedroom. If the former is the case, then it is possible that he does not enjoy sex with his wife. This may be because he is getting satisfaction somewhere else or that his wife just does not turn him on any longer.

Sometimes, people behave this way when they are engaging in extra-marital relationships and are feeling guilty about it. They therefore avoid getting close to their wives.

The couple must find a conducive time and atmosphere and talk about the problem. The wife can adopt an attitude of being with him in the sitting room when he is there and coax him gradually into the bedroom, that is, if the latter reason is the cause of his sleeping on the sofa.

This attitude can also point to the fact that the husband is no longer interested in sex. It is not a normal thing. The wife must therefore redouble her efforts, in addition to talking about it and identifying what is going wrong, to attract and hold him once again. Become sexy again, if you think you lost it.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30,"Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36 "Communication in Marriage").

Q. She will not have sex with me at dawn.

A. There is no particular time laid down for having sex. If your wife does not like dawn, one must compromise and initiate it at at the times when the wife is amenable to the whole idea. Think in terms of two and not one. These things are solved by compromising. The qualities of love will win. The wife must also think in the same way.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30,"Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. He does not compliment me. He is only expressive in the bedroom. He says, "I love you" once in 2 months.

A. Husbands must understand that wives respond very much to

things they hear while they (men) respond more to things they see and touch. What this means is that the more you say things they like, to their hearing, the more they open up to you.

Complimenting wives is so important a gesture that all husbands must learn to do it. When it is only done at times when you want to have sex, it exposes the manipulative intent of the compliment. Be liberal with complimenting your wife and let your actions back your words.

Wives must also understand that by their upbringing, some husbands struggle very much with giving compliments. Know your man and help him to learn it if he is that type. Learn also to be confident in who God says you are, even if you are not complimented.

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg.106, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the 'Masculinity' or 'Femininity'of Your Spouse").

Q. My husband's penis does not get hard enough and sometimes does not get hard at all.

A. These may be signs of temporary or "permanent" impotence. They are conditions that may require the help of a doctor. Wives must however bear in mind that there are several things that can also create such results. For example, too much stress, guilt and tiredness. It is therefore the responsibility of the wife to be reassuring during these times. The worst a wife can do is to taunt the husband. If it persists, then it is time to see a doctor. If it happens that he is diagnosed impotent then you must accept him in love and believe God for a miracle or the strength to live joyfully with the situation.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 35 pg. 158, "Common Fears about Sex—Fear of Impotence").

Q. My husband's penis softens in the course of sex.

A. There are probably a lot of things on his mind. The mind is the greatest sex organ and when a person's mind is loaded with stresses from work, tiredness, financial pressures, quarrels, etc. the ability to

achieve an erection is affected. The wife should be very reassuring and not condemning. Try to make the home a place for peace and refreshing. Seek medical help.

(Refer to Chapter 7 pg. 23, "The Christian Home—The Importance of the Home to the Husband and Wife"; Chapter 35 pg. 158, "Common Fears about Sex—Fear of Impotence").

Q. She doesn't like talking about sex.

A. Virtually all women do not like talking about sex. Indeed, some men also fall into this category. People will only engage in such conversation in an atmosphere of friendship, trust and total security. If you want your wife to discuss sex freely make sure she can discuss other things more freely with you. If you provide an atmosphere of trust and security, then it is likely that she can relax sufficiently to talk about sex.

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 106, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the 'Masculinity' or 'Femininity' of Your Spouse").

Q. He refuses to bath in the evenings, which I find irritating and uncomfortable.

A. Pleasurable sex demands that both parties must be relaxed and comfortable. If one party refuses to go the extra mile to make the other comfortable, they will be sowing the seeds of discord, which will also rob them of pleasure in sex.

Marriage is about making compromises. If the husband does not like bathing, for the sake of his wife and the marriage, he could begin bathing in the evening also. He must think in terms of two and not one.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She does not keep good hygiene so sex is an ordeal.

The husband must also find a nice non-offensive and loving way to draw his wife's attention to the unhygienic practices he complains of and help her to surmount them. After all, this is what marriage is about—to make each other better than when we met. She must

think in terms of two and not one.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Communication

Q. She's always quarrelling with me, and threatens to leave the marriage afterwards.

A. This wife has violated the basic biblical principles of communication: "speaking the truth in love". She must know that in dealing with her spouse, there are still things she should not allow to proceed from her mouth. Let the love of Christ constrain your speech and actions. Never threaten to quit the marriage; you are opening the door for Satan to have an advantage over you.

Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:27

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 35,"Communication in Marriage—Some Examples of Things Not To Say").

Q. She speaks disrespectfully to me when she is angry and corrects me in anger.

A. The wife must learn the rules of agape love: love is not rude, unruly; does not behave itself unseemly, etc). As a wife you are not likely not be able to change your husband with your angry outbursts. This behaviour may cause your husband to withdraw and keep to himself.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She easily takes offence and refuses to talk for days.

A. The characteristics of agape love emphasize that love is not easily provoked, and to live in silence for days only deepens the strain in the relationship. Make the effort to get your offence off your chest, by walking in forgiveness. A Christian is commanded by God to forgive.

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Ephesians 4:26

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape", Chapter 9 pg. 32-33, "Comunication in Marriage —Speak").

Q. Sometimes the way my wife talks to me is very bad. She talks back anyhow and even raises her voice in ordinary conversation.

A. This depicts a husband frustrated about the apparent show of disrespect and lack of circumspection in the attitude of his wife when talking to him.

It must be borne in mind that at least two things determine the manner in which people speak: upbringing and temperament. These two situations however, ought to be influenced by the Word of God once a person becomes saved.

The husband must first examine himself and see if he himself treats his wife with respect. This is seen by the way you talk to her and also, by whether you include her in making decisions. People usually respond to people who treat them with respect and decency, with an equal or more dose(s) of respect.

On the other hand, a few warped thinkers take the position that the harsher and more uncontrollable a wife is, the more she can get her husband to do things for her.

Wives are enjoined to submit to their own husbands in everything. The Bible says it is better to dwell at the corner of a roof than to dwell in the same house with a loud, contentious woman.

The husband must show leadership in the way he speaks to his wife. As he shows this example, his wife, if spiritual, will learn from it

and speak well and with respect.

Furthermore, the husband should identify a conducive time and raise the issue with his wife. Talk about the conduct and not the woman and learn to forgive each other.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30,"Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36, "Communication in Marriage").

Q. She corrects me in anger and is very disrespectful when she is angry and can say things that a Christian should not say.

A. No matter how much you are provoked you should, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

It is not appropriate for the wife to throw all Christian etiquette out of the window and just follow her anger and bitterness into talking carelessly and behaving disrespectfully. If on the other hand your wife is sensitive about certain issues then pray for the grace to be able to speak a word in its season so as not to generate much provocation. "Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24) rather than to provoke one another to hatred and bitterness.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36, "Communication in Marriage").

Q. My wife likes shouting at the children.

A. Sometimes wives/mothers shout at children because they get tired of saying the same things over and over again. It may also be that they feel frustrated about the fact that they do not receive enough help from the husband/father. Out of a feeling of impatience, they may take it out on the poor child.

The chapter on The Total Wife needs to be re-emphasised here. As a mother, a wife must be tender and accommodating. She must be patient even though she is tired from her several other roles. She must resist the temptation to vent her anger with her husband and

frustration with other issues, on the vulnerable and usually defenceless and impressionable children.

(Refer to Chapter 13 pg. 53-54, "The Total Wife").

Q. He does not respect my decisions and thinks I talk too much.

A. Every husband ought to understand the ways in which his wife is different from him. One of the fundamental differences is that women naturally have more to say about things than men do. They are also interested in details whereas men like the headlines.

Once this difference is appreciated, a husband will be able to accommodate the seemingly endless chatter of a wife. This is how women are; they are happier when they know that there is someone to listen to them. (Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 43-47, "Duties of the Husband").

Inasmuch as husbands ought to listen to their wives and seek their input in decision-making, it is the duty of the wife to ensure that her input is usually helpful. (Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 50-52, "Be a Virtuous Woman").

Q. He is too busy for us to talk about ourselves and our marriage.

A. It is normally not easy to hear a critique about one's performance. Every normal person tries to avoid situations in which his/her performance in an endeavour is going to be put on the carpet for scrutiny. This might explain why your husband cannot seem to make time for you to talk about "ourselves and our marriage". The wife may probably be making the mistake called "putting up sign posts". This is a situation in which one advertises their intention to hold a discussion about serious things, thus scaring away the other party who believes his conduct will be up for discussion.

The best thing to do might be to look for an opportune time when you know the other party is quite relaxed and even happy and, through the employment of wisdom and subtlety, introduce the

particular subject you want to discuss without raising sign posts such as, " I think we should talk", "we have to talk" etc.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage —Agape"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36,"Communication in Marriage").

Q. She picks up a quarrel with me at dawn.

A. Picking up a quarrel at anytime is not healthy, not just at dawn. However, it takes two to quarrel so if a wife wants to quarrel and a husband has nothing to say to fuel the quarrel, the quarrel cannot last. Remember that it is only by pride that we have contention. If only the husband could avoid pride and listen to whatever his wife has to say, there will be no quarrel.

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 107, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept Peace and Decide Not to Quarrel").

Q. He doesn't talk to me the way he talks with others. He ensures that discussions and transactions he holds with others are kept from me.

A. A situation such as the above may point to a lack of trust in the relationship and a feeling of familiarity, which, it is said, breeds contempt. Is it possible to critically assess oneself and see if there is a cause for this absence of trust? Have you been sharing things he shares with you in confidence with other people? Or are you also in the habit of keeping things away from him?

If there is no trust in a relationship, it will usually not be a lasting one. If you can locate the reason for the lack or loss of trust, try and repair the damage. Talk about it with your spouse, at an opportune time. If there is the need for apology, render it and redouble your efforts to repair the trust lost.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20, "The God-Type of Marriage—Openness", Chapter 8 pg. 38-30, "Love in Marriage— Agape").

Q. My husband does not appreciate me in my hearing.

A. Another thing that marriage thrives on is honour (1 Peter 3:7). Honouring somebody is something that is done openly. Honouring

someone secretly does not make much sense. Husbands must therefore honour their wives openly. If her food is good, say so openly to encourage her. Don't only rebuke, but show appreciation openly to encourage her to do better.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 33, "Communication in Marriage—Choose to Speak Life").

Q. My husband does not listen to me.

A. Wives feel happy when they are listened to. In fact, listening is a sign of love. It is the duty of a husband to make his wife feel happy. One of the ways to achieve this result is to listen to her talk. Most women enjoy talking. Wives, your duty is to inform and not to transform. So do that and prayerfully leave the rest to God.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 35, "Communication in Marriage—Avoid these things (e)").

Q. My wife says I don't communicate.

A. Communication is made up of both the verbal and the non-verbal. There are people who do well in one and not in the other. In other words, sometimes the things that we say are negated by the things we do. In every marriage there must be as much speaking as there is non-verbal communication. There must be a balance. Even though it is said that actions speak louder than words, words also have their place.

It must however be borne in mind that men don't talk as much as women do, generally speaking. It may therefore be the duty of a wife to get her husband to converse by leading him on and asking him follow-up questions without appearing to be an investigative journalist or a lawyer cross-examining a witness.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 32-33, "Communication in Marriage—Speak").

Q. He likes shouting at me.

A. This is usually a sign of disrespect if it is the normal way he speaks. On the other hand, if it is not his usual way of speaking to you, then it is likely that he is being eaten up by something. Leave

him a little and then later on get back to him and begin another conversation or discussion altogether. At the appropriate time let him know that it is in bad taste for him to shout at you.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 35, "Communication in Marriage—Avoid these things (a)").

Q. He speaks to me anyhow and gets angry about little things.

A. Ephesians 5:25 enjoins husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. If you love your wife the way Christ loved/loves us and died for us, you will be careful about the way you talk to your wife. That is the standard. Are you speaking to your wife the way Christ would have spoken to the church?

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 33, "Communication in Marriage—Choose to Speak Life").

Q. He does not chat with me. He prefers to speak to friends on phone. I only get information from such conversations he holds with friends.

A. A couple must make every effort to speak to each other (Ephesians 4:15). It is a sign that there is friendship in the marriage. Sometimes it is difficult for the two to converse, and this is because they may not have learnt to do so during courtship. It may also be a sign of a deteriorating relationship. It is not right that a husband reduces his wife to somebody who must only eavesdrop in order to know what is going on in his life.

If there was speaking before and it is now gone, take your time and identify the causes and deal with them. On the other hand, if it has never been a feature of the marriage, then it is something that you must work hard at getting in the marriage. At least there must be something that both of you may be interested in. If not, take time to learn the things your husband is interested in and converse intelligently with him. Don't leave out prayer. Gradually things will become better. Remember though, that a man also needs male friends he can talk to.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 33, "Communication in Marriage—Choose to Speak Life").

Q. He does not talk to me about his family issues. His siblings do not leave important messages with me even when he is absent.

A. It is unfortunate that you do not feel included. You must however bear in mind that at the end of the day he is the one you are married to, so if he is not letting you into his external family matters concentrate on what concerns your home.

Don't complain too much about it. Make yourself happy in your own home. The problem arises where he chooses his family above you or does not protect you against offences from his family. If he does not allow anyone to maltreat or disrespect you, but he only does not tell you things about his family, be content. Some people take longer to open up. It is probably not fatal to your marriage.

(Refer to Chapter 22 pg. 93-95, "In-laws").

Q. She does not agree with me often and misunderstands me though others don't.

A. Others who understand you don't live with you. They may not see all your shortcomings. What you communicate is made up of the verbal and non-verbal. You may be negating your verbal with your non-verbal attitude, hence the difficulty your wife has. Take your time, explain things, and let your sincerity about issues never be in doubt.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 32-35, "Communication in Marriage").

Q. We quarrel when we talk for just an hour.

A. It is obvious that the two of you are not friends. Communication in marriage is not about who can win an argument to prove that he is smarter. Furthermore, marriage is not a competition between a husband and a wife. It is a relationship based on love for the purpose of helping each other fulfil their God-given dreams.

It is only when marriage is viewed as a competition that any

conversation within it will be reduced to a battle of words. Take your time and talk to each other, just to enjoy each other's company and not to assess whether the other party is speaking sensibly or not. A critical spirit is a sign that there is no love. Love believes all things. Take your time and develop true friendship in your marriage.

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 107, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept Peace and Decide Not to Quarrel").

Q. He says very little, if anything at all. I feel like divorcing him.

A. Learn to accept that men are usually like that. Try solving the problem by leading him on to talk. Be content if he listens to you talk. He can never talk as much as you do. Don't let this drive you to divorce. Find ways and means of making yourself happy in the marriage. As he sees that you are happy without him, he is likely to open up more into your world.

Divorce has only one basis in Scripture which is adultery. There is no reason such as lack of communication. Work hard at communication, it will work. Don't leave prayer out and don't nag. Do not use divorce as a threat to resolve any issue: "Neither give place to the devil".

(Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 106, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the 'Masculinity' or 'Femininity' of Your Spouse"; Chapter 24 pg. 98-102, "What Every Christian Should know about Divorce").

Q. He thinks I complain too much and behave rudely when people come to the house.

A. If that is true then you must change your attitude. Maintain a sweet spirit. That is the only way you can make yourself attractive to your husband and not by throwing tantrums and being rude. Walk in love. Love does not behave itself unseemly.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She is always, second-guessing me.

A. This is a sign of lack of trust in the marriage. Make every effort to be transparent and communicate clearly and unambiguously about issues and make sure that you have been understood. It is a sign that there is no love in the relationship if there is suspicion all the time. Love believes all things.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20, "The God-Type of Marriage—Openness", Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage —Agape").

Q. She wants me to talk to only people she likes.

A. This sounds like a case of control and manipulation. It can never be possible that a husband will only talk to people that his wife likes. The cardinal principle in having a marriage that is godly and also for fostering faithfulness in marriage is to leave all friends especially those of the opposite sex and to cleave to your spouse. Furthermore, it is counselled that couples must have mutual friends.

This is certainly not an injunction on anyone to only speak to people the other approves of. Where this situation exists, there is a clear lack of trust. Examine what has engendered this unhealthy posture and deal with it.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20, "The God Type of Marriage—Openness").

Q. She /He doesn't like to talk about problems we are having, but prefers keeping quiet over issues.

A. If you can keep quiet over the issues and let it go, then that is fine. But it is widely accepted that people are better able to deal with problems once they are able to talk about them.

When you keep quiet you may be feeding your mind on some misunderstanding whereas if you spoke about it, some light could be shed on the problem for a solution to arrive more easily. Make every effort to speak so that there can be some relief.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 32-33, "Communication in Marriage—Speak").

Q. She tends to talk down to me if I don't agree with something.

A. The principles in God's Word that govern the marriage covenant cannot be flouted with impunity and overlooked. Husbands and wives are to observe certain rules of conduct stated in the Bible. As a wife you must "...be in subjection to your own husband ..."

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

1 Peter 3:1

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:22

(Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 48-52, "Duties of the Wife").

Finances

Q. He is selfish. He does not give me enough money.

A. Finances or the use of money is one of the areas in marriage capable of being controversial. In certain cultures, it is the responsibility of the husband to provide all the money needed. When that is the case, he seems to wield power to determine absolutely what money will be used for.

With our present economic realities, both husbands and wives contribute to the upkeep of the home. It therefore implies that whereas he is the head of the home, he does not reserve the right to unilaterally decide on what money will be used for in a home. Husbands are encouraged to give their wives enough spending money for the house as well as some to spend on themselves. Please do not be "arm-strong" or stingy.

(Refer to Chapter 15 pg. 58-60, "Principles of Finance in Marriage").

Q. He counts his pennies and talks too much about money.

A. Where it appears that he is the sole breadwinner, he may complain sometimes about money and its use. It is however not a

bad thing in itself that a man counts his pennies. It is a sign of frugality. However, if it leads to a situation where he is a miser, then something is wrong.

(Refer to Chapter 15 pg. 58-60, "Principles of Finance in Marriage"; See also the book "Frugality" by Dr. D.C. Heward-Mills).

Q. We cannot decide on how much to spend on clothes for ourselves.

A. It must be by consensus and discussion. It must be done rather scientifically and logically through the use of a budget. The point that is being made is that for there to be peace and joy at home, the use of money must be planned jointly bearing in mind that as stewards of God's money we will render account some day.

(Refer to Chapter 15 pg. 58-60, "Principles of Finance in Marriage").

Q. Should we have a joint bank account?

A. There is no rule that once married a couple must maintain a joint account. What is important is that they must operate their finances based on the principle that what each one has is for both. Furthermore, there must be transparency.

This means that whereas physically they may be operating from different bank accounts, substantially they will be operating a joint account because of the transparency.

(Refer to Chapter 15 pg. 58-60, "Principles of Finance in Marriage").

Q. He is so careful with money he makes life uncomfortable sometimes.

A. Being careful with money is supposed to be a good thing. When we are able to plug all leakages around our finances we are able to have more, so it is a sign of good management.

However, if it makes life uncomfortable for the wife then another look ought to be taken at the manner in which it is done. Handling of finances at home must be a mutual joint effort through discussion and dialogue. No one should feel left out. Encourage transparency.

(Refer to Chapter 15 pg. 58-60, "Principles of Finance in Marriage").

Attitude

Q. He is not helpful and has an "I don't care" attitude.

A. It is one of the duties of every husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). If a husband truly loves his wife, one of the things that he will do will be to protect her from the strain of housework. What this means is that he will help and support his wife in order that she does not crush under the weight of responsibilities she has to carry. (Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 43-47, "Duties of the Husband").

The wife must also bear in mind that as a Christian wife her roles are many, so she must ask for help nicely from her husband. Let him feel that you are appreciative of the little things he does around the house. Furthermore, even if she does not agree with this, she must make the husband believe that she is grateful for his help at home with domestic chores.

This approach massages the ego of the man and makes him want to do more. Resist the urge to bark out instructions about who should do what and who should not do what.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She is not submissive.

A. It is the duty of wives to submit to their own husbands in all things (Ephesians 5:22). Being submissive means to respect, yield, comply, and agree with. It is usually not very easy to do, but since it is a scriptural requirement, wives must strive to obey it.

Husbands must however bear in mind that submitting to them becomes easier for wives when the husbands love them as Christ loves the church.

Wives ought to know that submitting is not a weakness, but a sign of strength. A submissive wife is usually easier to dwell with than a contentious, fighting wife.

(Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 49, "Duties of the Wife—Submit to Your Husband").

Q. She is quick-tempered.

A. As leaders in the home, if a husband is dealing with a quick-tempered wife he must handle her as a weaker vessel and as one who needs to be helped. As the head, love her and accommodate and teach her from the Word of God and by your example.

Q. He does not show appreciation.

A. Again, it is the duty of every husband to make his wife feel happy at home. One can achieve this onerous task by among other things, letting her feel accepted; refraining from being harsh and staying at home as often as possible, and by being a companion.

In the absence of the above, it is not likely that any husband will have a contented wife to deal with. A husband must not behave as if his wife's sole preoccupation is to make him comfortable. Therefore, anything that she does to make his life more comfortable should be seen as something worthy of commendation and appreciation. The more he says "thank you", the more service he is likely to receive.

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 43-47, "Duties of the Husband").

Q. He does not stay at home often. He comes home late.

A. Is there a reason to believe that he goes to places where you suspect he may be having an affair or you are just uncomfortable with his nocturnal activities? Trust is very important if your marriage is going to last or to be harmonious and sweet. Suspicion is very unhealthy. "Love believes all things, hopes all things..." and "perfect love casts away all fears".

There must be openness about his movements to remove all doubts handle the issue in a way that does not make it obvious that you are trailing him and are full of suspicion.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 20, "The God-Type of Marriage—Openness", Chapter 8 pg. 33-35, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She lacks initiative and purpose.

A. These are signs of a wife with a particular temperament—most likely a phlegmatic. The duty of her husband is to compliment the effort of his wife. You will notice that where you also have some weaknesses she will also have strengths. Marriage is about complimenting each other.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 25 pg. 106, The Key of Acceptance— "Accept the "Masculinity" or "Femininity" of Your Spouse").

Q. She is forgetful.

A. It is the duty of a husband to be tolerant of the weaker vessel and to protect her. Remind her of things she is likely to forget, and help her to plan her life. After all, that is why she married you.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Chapter 25 pg. 104-106,"The Key of Acceptance – Accept the Temperament of Your Spouse").

Q. She complains too much about household chores.

A. If she is complaining about work, it is likely that she is also not receiving much help. Try helping and joining her to do the chores. As you do things together, you will notice that what she did not enjoy doing will become a bit more enjoyable.

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 46, "Duties of the Husband—Protect and Care for Her (a)").

Q. She is domineering.

A. She is likely to be choleric in temperament. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of a choleric wife and what to do if you are married to one.

(Refer to Chapter 18 pg. 72-74, "Strengths and Weaknesses of a Choleric Wife"; Chapter 43 pg. 190,, "What to do if you are married to a Choleric Husband or Wife"; Chapter 25 pg. 106, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the Temperament of Your Spouse").

Q. She insists on doing things I have asked her not to do.

A. (Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 49, "Duties of the Wife—Submit to your Husband").

Q. He does not take time to find out what is wrong with me when I am troubled.

A. This is an issue pointing to one of the greatest desires of every wife, that is, attention from her husband. As stated earlier, it is the duty of every husband to let his wife feel happy at home. One of the ways to achieve this is to let her feel accepted. There is no way a husband can let his wife feel accepted if he does not spend time with her or factor her into plans he is making.

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 46, "Duties of the Husband—Protect and Care for Her (a)").

Q. He puts me at the bottom of his list of priorities.

A. Furthermore, in order to develop a good Christian home, each person must think in terms of two and not one (Philippians 2:3). The husband must plan his life in such a way that he spends quality time with his wife. The issue is not about quantity, but quality. One can only achieve this by proper planning together and by eschewing selfishness.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 43-47, "Duties of the Husband).

Q. He is always instructing me. He says he is a commander.

A. In a marital home there is no commander. It is neither a battlefield nor a parade ground.

In marriage there are partners. There is a head and a helper—this does not call for a commander/subordinate relationship.

Husbands must honour and respect their wives and treat them as the weaker vessels. Once this is being done, the wife will not need to be ordered about. She will serve with love and contentment. If you have to order your wife around to feel that you are the head,

then you are failing woefully as a head. You can achieve that through providing loving leadership and example.

On the other hand, your husband may probably be choleric in temperament and therefore you must understand the strengths and weaknesses of a choleric husband and what to do if you are married to one.

(Refer to Chapter 18 pg. 70-72, "Strengths and Weaknesses of a Choleric Husband"; Chapter 43 pg. 190, "What to do if you are married to a Choleric Husband or Wife"; Chapter 25 pg. 106, "The Key of Acceptance—Accept the Temperament of Your Spouse").

Q. She does not easily forget about issues.

A. If that means she does not easily forgive then it will be difficult to solve problems and live in harmony in such a home. As for forgetting, one must intentionally forget. It happens over a period, but to forgive is a divine injunction. It is required by God.

In a marriage there will always be offence but forgiveness must also be present to deal with the offences that arise. Unforgiveness is a spiritual matter and God does not forgive those who do not forgive. Husband, help your wife, with the Word of God, to appreciate this. Furthermore, teach her by your example on how to forgive and let go.

(Refer to Chapter 21 pg. 89-92, "Problem Solving in Marriage"; Chapter 9 pg. 32-36, "Communication in Marriage").

Q. She is very defensive when I confront her about things I do not like.

A. Self-preservation is one of the most powerful instincts in every living being. When your wife senses hostility and the fact that she is under attack, she fights back to preserve herself. This is not the best way to deal with issues in marriage.

You must learn to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). In other words, when and how you say what you have to say is important. Be guided by this and you will be able to get your wife to accept

her shortcomings more easily.

(Refer to Chapter 9 pg. 32-36, "Communication in Marriage").

Q. She does not say sorry easily.

A. Many times marital conflicts are unresolved because no one wants to say sorry. However, a soft answer turns away wrath and he who confesses and forsakes his sins will obtain mercy.

(Refer to Chapter 21 pg. 89-92,"Problem-Solving in Marriage").

Q. I do not like the way he talks to me sometimes especially when our domestic help and others are around.

A. Again, we must learn to speak the truth in love. Furthermore, Galatians. 6:1 teaches us how to correct others who may have made mistakes. When you correct your spouse, it is not appropriate for you to do so in the presence of others—wait and do it at a more appropriate time and place. That is what shows that you are doing it in love and not in anger or self-righteousness.

(Refer to Chapter 21 pg. 89-92, "Problem Solving in Marriage").

Spiritual

Q. She is not spiritual enough.

A. It is the duty of the husband according to Ephesians 5:29 to nourish and cherish his wife with the Word of God. He is also the leader in the home. If the wife is not spiritual enough, the head has the responsibility to discipline her in love, like any new convert, until she becomes spiritual enough. Remember that it is God who does the changing and not the husband.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 105-109, "The Key of Acceptance").

Q. He does not pray as he used to do before our marriage. I wish he was more godly, that is, prayerful.

A. These are all the cries of a wife about the unspiritual attitude of

her husband. In Genesis 2:18 God said He was making a help meet for the man. What this means is that the wife is a helper to her husband. This means she is to help in every way, including spiritually.

The ideal thing in marriage is for the husband, as head, to take the lead in spiritual matters. However, in the instances above, it might appear that the wife is rather the one ahead spiritually.

If you as a wife, try to give him a lecture on how important it is to pray or not to backslide, you may not achieve much. What is sure to work is your prayer for him. Find a good time and be praying while he is around. Try inviting him without being too forceful. Gradually, with prayer and wisdom, I believe you will be able to get him to do what he should do.

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

1 Peter 3:1

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 105-109, "The Key of Acceptance").

Q. He likes to move with unbeliever friends and sees nothing wrong with being with them.

A. This may be a sign that your husband is backsliding but you must walk in love towards him. "Love never fails". The duty of a backsliding husband's wife is first to pray for him. Second, find subtle ways of making him stay at home, or to desire to be at home more than with his friends. As a last resort, create an atmosphere and talk to him.

The thrust of whatever you speak to him about must be the salvation of his soul, and not too much about the safety of your marriage. Once he is restored, his attitude to the marriage and to staying at home will also most likely be affected positively.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape").

Q. She seems not to attach much seriousness to serving in church.

A. The truth is that you cannot force your wife to like serving in church. One of the things that may account for this attitude may be that she does not get much help from you with the handling of the household chores.

Furthermore, she may not see the difference in your life even though you are so involved in church work. If however, this is not the case, then there is a genuine cause for concern.

As the head, there must be a way to get your household to follow you in serving God. Have a chat with your wife and know what her real difficulties are and assist her, with patience and love, to surmount them. You must however, bear in mind that it is not everybody who will be zealous in serving in the church. It depends on the degree of conviction, growth, and commitment of the person. Aim at getting your wife to become more mature as a Christian, while you show her a good example as a Christian husband.

(Refer to Chapter 8 pg. 28-30, "Love in Marriage—Agape"; Refer to Chapter 25 pg. 105-109, "The Key of Acceptance").

Q. I want to be able to pray with my family regularly. He does not pray with me.

A. It is ideal to have both husband and wife praying together with the whole family. The reality is that it may not happen that way. I would first suggest that the wife should be grateful that she has a husband, who, at least prays.

It is important that a couple prays together sometimes. This helps the bonding of the two, and the Bible states that if two agree as touching anything in prayer it has greater effect. It is therefore in the interest of the couple to find time to pray together sometimes.

As the head of the home, it is the responsibility of the husband to be the priest of the home. As a priest, therefore, his duty is to bring his family together occasionally for fellowship. Be like Abraham and command your household after you. You may have separate

prayer times and join up on certain issues.

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Genesis 18:19

This helps the couple to stay together and to obviate certain negative tendencies that may be gaining root among the children.

(Refer to Chapter 7 pg. 22-27, "The Christian Home").

Q. We are unable to practically apply or involve godly principles in situations that confront us.

A. It is unfortunate that the very thing that can help you solve problems in your marriage is what you have difficulty doing. You can only do this when you consciously decide that God knows better than you do and that if He has said something in His Word concerning the situation, it will definitely be a better solution than yours.

In other words, it takes a commitment to decide that we are going to apply biblical principles to solving problems in the marriage. Even if one party is unwilling, the other can stick to the biblical stance and what the Bible says. Through your obedience to the Word, you may win him to your side.

(Refer to Chapter 7 pg. 27-32,"The Christian Home").

Family Matters

Q. She listens to her mother more than to me.

A. Trust and confidence is earned, so no one can wish them into being. The husband must work hard to earn the trust of his wife. In other words, if a wife listens to someone else more than to her husband, it could indicate an absence of trust.

On the other hand, a wife ought to know that Genesis 2:24 enjoins

"leaving and cleaving" as vital for the success of any marriage. She must leave the influence, direction and control of her parents (mother) in order to cleave to her husband.

She must learn that the marriage concerns both of them more than any other person, hence the counsel of the husband must be deemed more germane to the marriage than the counsel of any other. The husband should try and improve upon friendship and communication in the marriage.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 19-20, "The God Type of Marriage—Leaving and Cleaving").

Q. She is unable to make time as far as taking care of the home is concerned.

A. Wives are naturally "harassed" people in marriage in this part of the world. Their roles include: worker, cook, sex partner, mother, Christian and hostess. A combination of all these can sometimes prove to be rather overwhelming for many a wife.

What appears to be happening in this case is that the wife is solving her challenges by neglecting some of her roles in a home. This usually creates other problems.

The way to deal with this problem is for the husband to protect her from the strain of housework. She must also learn to ask for help. Furthermore, she must bear in mind that all her roles are equally important. Finally, she must know that she can do all things through Christ who strengthens her.

Husband, talk about the situation with your wife and, together, fashion out a strategy to help her organize her life better.

(Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 48-52,"Duties of the Wife"; Chapter 13 pg. 53-54, "The Total Wife").

Q. She neglects the children.

A. The response for this will not be any different from the one immediately before this. The wife may need some help in organizing things. If on the other hand, her handicap is the fact that

she genuinely does not know how to handle children, then they must seek counselling to resolve the matter to avoid any future problems.

(Refer to Chapter 12 pg. 48-52, "Duties of the Wife"; Chapter 13 pg. 53-54, "The Total Wife").

Q. He loves his friends and family more than me.

A. This is a rather serious conclusion to arrive at. However, it is possible that he has shown some signs that give his wife the impression that he cares more about his family (extended) and friends more than her. The husband needs to be reminded of the injunction in Genesis 2:24 which requires him to leave all else and cleave to his wife to create a oneness.

The solution to this matter is for the husband to obey Scripture. The wife must also create an atmosphere, which makes it almost compelling for the husband to want to be with her more than with his friends and family. One of the most result-yielding attitudes suggested to the wife is for her to maintain a meek and quiet, and sweet spirit. Such an attitude only attracts.

Furthermore, make your husband know that you are a virtuous woman with wisdom.

(Refer to Chapter 6 pg. 19-20, "Leaving and Cleaving"; Chapter 12 pg. 50-51, "Duties of the Wife—Be a Virtuous Woman").

Q. He does not rebuke his family members who offend me.

A. It is the duty of every husband to protect and care for his wife. One of the areas that he must protect his wife from is wrong attitudes from his own relatives and friends.

A husband must know that not all of his people will appreciate his choice of a wife. His duty is therefore to ensure that he protects her from those who may not particularly like her. This protection can be done by showing strong disapproval for improper ways in which anyone treats his wife. This sends a message that he will not allow his wife to be mistreated. Any husband who leaves his wife to be

harassed by his relatives and friends is failing in his duty to protect his “weaker vessel” wife.

(Refer to Chapter 11 pg. 46, “Duties of the Husband—Protect and Care for Her (a)”; Chapter 22 pg. 93-95, “In-laws”).

Q. His son does not respect me.

A. When dealing with a step-child, it is the responsibility of the husband/father to bring the child to order, so as to strengthen the hand of his wife to instil discipline in the children.

(Refer to Chapter 23 pg. 96-97, “The Step Home”).

Q. She does not relate well with my relatives. She feels my relatives are bad.

A. It is the responsibility of each party to ensure that he/she nurtures a good relationship with his/her in-laws. This relationship, sometimes, tends to be very problematic; either because the spouse in question is difficult and condescending, or that the family does not like their child’s choice of spouse. As far as it lies in your power, try to live at peace with all men, especially with your in-laws. In the long run, this will help the marriage to blossom.

(Refer to Chapter 22 pg. 93-95, “In-laws”).

The End

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